

DAINTY DINNER
TABLES

AND

HOW TO DECORATE THEM.

ONE SHILLING.



22101453299

THE WALTER SCOTT PUBLISHING CO., LTD.,
Paternoster Square, London ; and Felling-on-Tyne.

WITH THE PUBLISHERS'
COMPLIMENTS.

[*The Published Price of this Book is*]



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016

<https://archive.org/details/b28048088>

Med
K10294

1/ 13/11

DAINTY DINNER TABLES
AND
HOW TO DECORATE THEM

UNIFORM WITH THIS VOLUME.
The Useful Red Series.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.

INDIGESTION: ITS PREVENTION AND CURE.
By F. HERBERT ALDERSON, M.B.

"A handy pocket-book of advice as to foods digestible and indigestible, beverages, and the general regulation of diet."—*Daily News*.

NEW IDEAS ON BRIDGE. By ARCHIBALD DUNN,
Author of "Bridge, and How to Play it."

"The book is of great value. Mr. Dunn shows a grasp of every feature of the game, and his clearly stated counsel on abstruse and difficult points will be heartily welcomed."—*Glasgow Herald*.

ON CHOOSING A PIANO. By ALGERNON S. ROSE.

"Mr. Rose's book is excellent in every way, and we cordially recommend it."—*Musical Opinion*.

CONSUMPTION: ITS NATURE, CAUSES, PREVENTION, AND CURE. By DR. SICARD DE PLAUZOLES.

"The style is easy, the explanations are lucid, and the advice may be followed with confidence."—*Literary World*.

BUSINESS SUCCESS. By G. G. MILLAR.

"A clearly written guide to good business methods; practical and of good influence."—*Bookman*.

PETROLEUM: ITS POWER AND USES. By
SYDNEY H. NORTH.

DIET AND HYGIENE FOR INFANTS. By F.
HERBERT ALDERSON, M.B.



No. 1.—WINTER TABLE. See page 149.

DAINTY DINNER TABLES

AND HOW TO DECORATE THEM

BY

MRS. ALFRED PRAGA,

AUTHOR OF

"DINNERS OF THE DAY," "APPEARANCES," "STARTING HOUSEKEEPING,"
"WHAT TO WEAR AND WHEN TO WEAR IT," "EASY FRENCH
DISHES FOR ENGLISH COOKS," "EASY FRENCH SWEETS
FOR ENGLISH COOKS," "HOW TO FURNISH WELL
AND CHEAPLY," "COOKERY AND HOUSE-
KEEPING," "EASY FISH ENTRÉES FOR
ENGLISH COOKS," "THE ART OF
HOUSEKEEPING," "HOW TO
MANAGE ON £200
A YEAR."

London and Felling=on=Tyne:

THE WALTER SCOTT PUBLISHING CO., LTD.

NEW YORK: 3 EAST 14TH STREET

1907

1970379

WELLCOME INSTITUTE LIBRARY	
Coll.	welMOmec
Call	
No.	4T

INTRODUCTION.

OF late years table adornments and floral decorations of all kinds and varieties may be said to have reached the level of a fine art ; indeed, nowadays it is by no means uncommon to hear of hostesses who have paid as much as £5, £10, £20, £30, and upwards for the floral decorations of a single dinner-party. But to be able to spend £5 upon flowers alone means the possession of a good deal more coin of the realm than the average housewife has at her disposal. It is possible, however, to have very dainty tables without the expenditure of a large amount of cash, for in this connection, as in other matters, natural good taste will go a great deal farther and fare better than a large amount of money injudiciously expended.

Food served amid dainty surroundings invariably “tastes nicer” than that which one eats where the only attempt at table decoration is a cruet of anti-

quoted and by no means beautiful pattern, and perhaps a very dusty and dejected looking plant, yclept a palm, in a pot draped with crinkled paper which has emphatically seen its best days.

I may perhaps be considered ultra-sensitive by the practical mind, but personally I always lose my appetite under (to me) such adverse circumstances. And nowadays too, when rapid transit and cheap railway rates bring a wealth of moderately priced blossoms to our very doors, there is really no excuse for having anything but a dainty table at any and every season of the year.

It is in the hope of being useful to the great army of gentlefolk who love beautiful things, but cannot afford to pay for the services of a first-class florist every evening, and also for those who, away in the heart of the country, are precluded by distance from employing outside aid, that the following carefully thought-out schemes for floral decoration have been compiled. They are one and all, with perhaps a notable exception or two, well within the means of the moderately pursed.

As regards the actual cost of the blooms themselves, these of course vary according to the season of the year, and for this reason the schemes will be found to be divided into "summer tables,"

“Christmas tables,” etc. Of course dwellers in the country possess an enormous advantage over dwellers in towns so far as the schemes for wild flowers are concerned, as these can be gathered almost at their very door. They have also an advantage with regard to cultivated flowers, as country-people generally have gardens, but towns-people have to purchase their flowers either in the markets or from shops ; besides, at certain seasons of the year, notably in the depth of winter or the early spring, blossoms are sometimes apt to be unreasonably dear. There is always an exception to this rule, however, in the shape of the really invaluable penny and twopenny bunches of violets, and I hope to show later what may be achieved in the way of table decoration with the aid of these only.

We cannot, I admit, all afford rare orchids or exotics at half-a-guinea a single spray, but a shilling’s-worth of blooms is within the reach of those whose incomes average £500 a year, and it is for them that I am more especially writing.

In conclusion, I frankly admit that it is not an easy matter to make a table look really dainty at a small cost ; it requires no small amount of thought and careful planning. It means seeing to and

arranging the flowers oneself, not relegating the task to a perhaps only partially trained parlour-maid ; it requires contrivance to ensure a different, or at any rate a slightly varied, combination every night that one may happen to dine at home. Nevertheless, in the following pages I shall prove that it can be done, and more—that it can be done successfully.

A. PRAGA.

October 1907.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION - - - - -	v
CHAP.	
I.—THE ARRANGEMENT OF FLOWERS -	11
II.—THE ARRANGEMENT OF FLOWERS— <i>(Continued)</i> - - - - -	26
III.—SOME “DON'TS” FOR AMATEUR FLORISTS - - - - -	37
IV.—SUMMER TABLES - - - - -	44
V.—COUNTRY TABLES - - - - -	54
VI.—TREE TABLES - - - - -	73
VII.—SCHEMES FOR DINNER-PARTIES - -	88
VIII.—VERY INEXPENSIVE TABLES - -	109

CHAP.	PAGE
IX.—TABLES FOR CHILDREN'S PARTIES	- 120
X.—CHRISTMAS DECORATIVE SCHEMES	- 127
XI.—SUPPER PARTIES - - - -	- 133
XII.—SILVER WEDDING SCHEME - -	- 141
XIII.—THE QUESTION OF COST - - -	- 143
XIV.—FLORAL SCHEME FOR A CHRISTENING PARTY - - - - -	- 147
XV.—SEASON SCHEMES - - - -	- 149

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

No. 1.—Winter Table - - -	<i>Frontispiece</i>
„ 2.—Autumn Table - - - -	36
„ 3.—Spring Table - - - -	80
„ 4.—Spring Table - - - -	120

DAINTY DINNER TABLES,

AND HOW TO DECORATE THEM.



CHAPTER I.

THE ARRANGEMENT OF FLOWERS.

THE very first thing towards which the amateur florist must direct her attention is the arrangement of the flowers chosen, whatever kind they may chance to be; and equally with this she should consider—if her means are limited, as I am now supposing them to be—the receptacles for these flowers. One rule with regard to the latter—*i.e.*, the vases or specimen glasses, as the case may be—she must observe, and that is never to choose such as possess very wide mouths. The reason for this, of course, is obvious, since twice the amount of blossoms will be required if the receptacles have large necks, and this, as will be seen at a glance, very materially increases the expenditure.

As for bowls—unless she either lives in the

country or has a garden or a greenhouse at hand which she may rifle at her own sweet will—she should avoid them. The “quaint old china bowl” so beloved of the lady novelist sounds, I know, beautiful when one reads of it; and in theory it is beautiful; but in practice it is a nasty thing. It swallows up half-a-crown’s worth of blooms without the least compunction; and, vulgarly speaking, doesn’t make a bit of show with them either, unless they are arranged by a professional florist and duly wired, etc.

I know that bowl. In the innocence of my heart I have tried and tried again to arrange a “handful of flowers”—*vide* the aforesaid lady novelist—in it, and it has circumvented me every time; so that now, unless a plenitude of blooms are mine, I will have none of it. It is deceitful, too, as well as a whole host of other things it ought not to be. Just try filling it with water and arranging flowers in it. Why, it simply laughs at you. Nobody can ever manage it except the heroine of the lady novelist aforesaid. It behaves properly to her. She just takes “a handful of careless blooms, great creamy white and blushing red roses, and groups them within it with a strangely rare grace,” and they do not topple all to one side, or else double up and drop half-way into the water, as they do when you or I try to group them without the aid of wet sand or moss and here and there a wire. Oh no! nothing of the

sort. The heroine's roses stay where she puts them, and the hero comes in and finds them. She has gone upstairs to put on one of those marvellous washed-out old muslins of hers for the squire's garden party. Wonderful things those muslin gowns are, too, in their way. Not one of them is a day less than half-a-dozen years old; but when the heroine dons one and goes to the garden party, she always takes the shine out of everybody else, though all the other women's clothes have come from Worth or Félix or Pingat. But the heroine has tucked one of those roses of hers into her belt, and is "the best-dressed woman there." I wish she'd give me the recipe and the address of her laundress. What a marvel that laundress must be, and what terms she would get if she would only come and set up in my neighbourhood!

When the heroine lives in a town she is equally lucky; she never expends more than a "few pence." Poor as she is (and she is all but starving) she cannot—no, she cannot do without flowers. They remind her of her lost inheritance, and she buys a "great glowing bunch of roses" to "brighten up her dingy room." Now, when you or I go to buy roses of that description, we always have to pay from 1d. to 2d. or 3d. each for them. I do wish I could find out one of the flower-girls who supply the heroines of novels. She should have all my custom and that of my friends as well.

But enough of nonsense; it is time we went on

to more serious matter, so let us return to the practical arrangement of flowers, as against the poetic and fictional.

The first thing then, as I have said—if the sum you can afford to spend upon blossom is only a limited one—is to see that the specimen glasses and vases provided for their reception have narrow, but not *too* narrow necks. You must remember that flowers, if well arranged, will present quite twice as gallant an appearance in vases of this sort as they would in the quaint china bowl before referred to, or in large specimen glasses.

As regards the kind of vases and glasses to be employed, I would advise you to, if possible, invest in, say, two or three sets, and ring the changes on these. For example, one set might be of white Coalport china. Imitation Coalport can be bought very cheaply, and if modern, even the real is by no means unduly expensive.

If you do not care for Coalport—and I have met people who do not—there are the really exquisite modern imitations of old Leeds to be had at very modest prices; and in this case the dinner service should, I think, match also. So much for china. In glass there are the delightful modern reproductions of old Nuremberg in the quaintest goblet and a dozen other forms besides; and the prices for these, I would remark, commence as low as 6d. or 8½d. each. Truly a modest sum when one considers their dainty grace.

If you wish for something quaint and out of the common, try a set of Benares brass ware. These can be bought very cheaply at almost any "art" shop which makes a speciality of Oriental goods. Five of odd sizes should go to the set—viz., one by way of a centre-piece, and one for each of the four corners of the table centre. A word, too, must be said in praise of the delightfully pretty and artistic green Bohemian glass. A centre-piece consisting of four or five vase-shaped glasses, supported by a stand of black iron scroll work, can be bought for as low a price as 8s. 11d., whilst four corner vases to match will only cost you 2s. 11d. each. Then again, the Indian ware in shades of scarlet and green adapts itself admirably to table decoration, especially if the centre slip chosen to accompany it is of the beetle-wing embroidery, which can now be had so cheaply at any of the before-mentioned art shops.

Where a scheme of yellow is intended, and yellow flowers of different sorts are to be employed, nothing, to my mind, can equal the cheap (or expensive) blue and white Japanese and Chinese ware, vases of which are to be had at prices ranging from as low as 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. each in some instances. And really, although it sounds like the highest of treason to put such a thing down in black and white, not only is it impossible almost for the average non-artistic person to tell the difference between the real and the spurious, but the effect

of your scheme will not suffer in even the slightest degree by your substituting the cheapest kind of ware for the more expensive.

I have always heartily agreed with the well-known lady writer who is reported to have said or written, that "colour was the salvation of the impecunious," and really as regards table decoration at any rate, her dictum is true. It costs not one whit more (and often less) to buy a table centre of a beautiful shade than it does to invest in a crude magenta or green which would set the teeth of an artist on edge; and oh! how infinitely better it is in every way, and how much more pleasant to look at.

However, we will return to the subject of table centres, etc., later on. For the present let us direct our attention to the vases which are to hold our flowers when we have bought them.

In addition to the various sets I have above recommended, there are the delightful vases of the old Devonshire pottery and the green Belgian ware. A table scheme wherein lilies-of-the-valley, interspersed with their own beautiful sheath-like leaves and asparagus ferns, figure in vases of green Belgium pottery, is veritably something to remember, I can assure you.

Then in addition to all these there are the ever new and delightful vases, jugs, fern pots, and in fact table ornaments of almost every description in that loveliest of all ware—yclept

gris de Flandres. Who that has ever seen a table bedecked with yellow and purple orchid iris in pots of *gris de Flandres*, the vivid yellows and purples and pale mauves of the flowers contrasted against the pearly greys and wonderful bright yet dark blue of the pottery, can ever forget the sight? Why, it is enough to make the most colour-blind amongst us regain his vision, and sigh for palette and brush and the art to reproduce it.

Then again, blue larkspur in these self-same vases! Blue larkspur against a table slip of faded mauve velvet—oh! how unutterably delicious it is to tired eyes, and how it rests one mentally, as not all the scarlets and pinks and prominent colours in the world, let them shriek as they will, could ever hope to do.

✓ There are also vases of real or imitation Majolica. Have you ever tried a great bunch of ruddy-brown-red wallflowers in an old Majolica vase, with tiny attendant vases at either corner of your centre-piece filled with wallflowers and forget-me-nots intermingled? and did it not bring back something of those old, lost illusions which rarely outlast one's teens, when we thought the world such a delightful place, when all friends were true, and all lovers something different from mere men and women? Oh! I'll warrant me it did. And àpropos of the above-mentioned *gris de Flandres* vases, have you ever tried the effect of a great loosely-tied sheaf of gladioli intermixed with

feathery asparagus fern in a tall and slender jug of this ware, and set it upon a slip of dove-grey Roman satin, with quaint little bonbon dishes here, there, and everywhere, filled with bright scarlet sweets? Why, just to look at them—those real flowers, flaunting it gaily as though in defiance of anything else in Nature to be so superbly beautiful—is enough to raise your spirits, be you ever so deep in the slough of despond. Do not they seem to say, “Cheer up, cheer up! friends *are* true sometimes. Fortune will smile after all. Cheer up, you dull human things, and take a lesson from the flowers.” And the smiles begin to creep back to lips that deemed themselves almost too tired to smile—simply at sight of a sheaf of scarlet gladioli in a great grey jug from far-off Flanders.

Have you ever experimented with a bunch of double daffodils in one of these same vases? Why the gold and the grey and the blue, oh! they are the very spirit of the spring and the gladness thereof itself. Try it and prove me right. It hurts a little to descend to the question of dross—the gold of the world as against the gold of the fairies—with one’s mind full of the sweet scent of the sweetest flowers that ever grew in woodland, but we must for your benefit. The fact must be chronicled that these vases of the modern kind cost but a single florin each, and sometimes may be had for even less than that by several pence. So to your lasting shame be it an’ you do without

them. But even now we have by no manner or means exhausted quite all the sorts of specimen glasses and vases it is possible to buy if none of the foregoing suit your mood. There are to be had—quite inexpensively too, be it noted—exquisite reproductions of Queen Anne glass, notably those tall custard or syllabub glasses which adapt themselves most admirably to flowers and lend a grace to any table whereon they figure. To revert for a moment to Belgian pottery, there are also the quaint jugs, vases, and bowls of the bright green Belgian ware, which are simply ideal when seen against the white of table napery and the glint of table silver. Their daintiness may be had for so small a cost too! Why a single crown will provide you with a set of five;—a quaint low bowl for a centre-piece and four vases each boasting of three handles, which you may dispose of as seems to you best: one at either of the four corners of the table slip or dotted here and there in irregular fashion, if regularity does not suit your taste.

Again, supposing that you boast a garden wherein “sweet flowers blow” and that in profusion, there are copper bowls. Yes, I know I have up to now had nothing except evil to speak of the bowl as a receptacle for flowers; but that, mark you, was only meant for the eyes and ears of London readers. The happy folk living in the country who may run riot among flowers if they so wish, should prize their bowls, whether the

latter be of china or metal with a ruddy glint upon them, which may be had for a fraction under three shillings apiece, and when flowers are scarce may be utilized for ferns or palms, etc. These bowls are also sometimes fashioned of brass, and though in the latter case they are a trifle more costly, and the source moreover of much vexation of spirit to the housemaid to whose lot it falls to clean them, they are yet so beautiful, especially when filled with scarlet poinsettias, that one has need of all one's strength of mind if one would resist the temptation of buying one.

There are queerly shaped vases of Chinese ware, costing but a few pence each, but of infinite value if one would arrange an Oriental table. They are of all sorts, shapes, and sizes too, so that you have a variety of choice before you when purchasing.

To hark back to English ware, there remains still the dainty Devonshire pottery in delightful reds and yellows and blues and tans, and, oh! such a green, with the very incarnation of spring in its fresh, bright tones. These latter also are obtainable at almost any of the big stores or shops with an "Art Department," and cost at the very outside only a single shilling or couple of shillings each.

Besides the above-mentioned, there are still the great army of so-called "fancy" glasses to be considered; whilst perhaps loveliest of any is the far-famed Salviati glass, although the latter is, I

believe, slightly more costly than any of the fore-named examples. A set of Salviati glass table ornaments, in which category I include of course specimen vases for flowers as well as all drinking glasses, ice plates, etc., is a possession to be justly proud of when obtained; for the colours are so exquisitely blended that they accord with any and every scheme of floral table decoration you may fix on. Where, however, an entire set of the glass is a commodity beyond your means, let me say a word in favour of the specimen vases before mentioned, and the sweet dishes to match. They would grace any table, and as they are by no means of the wide-mouthed order before referred to, they may be admirably adapted to schemes where from scarcity or motives of economy the stock of flowers is a rather limited one.

Where the purchase of new vases is really quite beyond the reader's means, let me advise the following plan; it was one carried out by a friend of my own, who really obtained marvellously good effects by means of its aid. She purchased one of those gigantic glazed brown earthenware jugs full of cream. This cost her half-a-crown; and four or six—I forget the exact number—tiny glazed brown jugs to match; these full of cream cost 5½d. each. When the cream had gone the way of all cream, she turned the set to account as specimen vases. The large one served as a centre-piece, the smaller ones for one of each of

the corners of the centre-cloth. Filled with daffodils and their lovely grey green leaves, or with yellow poppies and asparagus fern, the effect obtained was surprisingly good, more especially when the table centre was of dull sage green, or russet brown velvet, or of tawny orange silk, with a bordering of asparagus fern.

I so often hear the excuse given among those of my friends who are not over-blessed with worldly wealth, "Oh! I can't afford really pretty tables (*i.e.*, dinner tables); I just make a few ferns and a palm do." As a matter of fact, this, to my mind, is really no excuse at all. Ferns and palms are not given away, remember. They have to be bought by some one, and with even the very best of amateur care they do not last so very long. So if you spread the money thus spent over a longer period it will supply you well with flowers; in limited quantities of course, but still with flowers.

And here let me say just one word against surely the most hideous of all travesties for any purpose when the decoration of our rooms or dinner-tables, etc., are concerned: I refer to the paper flowers now sold on every hand, and which one or two of the "ladies' papers" have lately made rather a practice of recommending as an aid to decoration, but more especially to table decoration.

To my mind—although I admit I may perhaps be a little squeamish, not to say prejudiced on this point—paper flowers in relation to table decoration

bear the same aspect, and are just as heinous an artistic crime, as, say, painting a little child's face would be. They deceive nobody, and it is safe to say they afford pleasure to nobody. Then why use them at all? They are not beautiful, and scent them overpoweringly as you will, it is impossible to pass them off as real; added to which, if you try the better qualities, they are by no means so cheap as to warrant so mean and pitiful an economy.

Better a handful of God's green grass than the best imitation of roses ever turned out by the hands of man yet; at least so I think, and I fervently hope that I may induce the reader to think with me.

Hey! how one's pen flies! I set out to tell you of the arrangement of flowers at the commencement of this chapter, and here have I been prating all this while of the vases wherein they may best disport themselves. Even now, too, I find that I have omitted to mention the exquisite vases, etc., of modern Della Robbia pottery. These also may be bought quite cheaply; and when not in use as flower vases, are quite beautiful enough to take rank as ornaments; as a matter of fact, it is in this capacity that they are, I believe, mostly used. Furthermore, there is that other pottery, "deeply, darkly, beautifully green," yclept Vilia ware. Purchase two or three of those quaint long and slender jugs, and from four to six of the little squat vases to match. Fill the jugs with feathery

mimosa, and the squat vases made with the flowering part of the mimosa and asparagus fern, and delight awaits you, of that you may be very sure.

Before I go fairly on to the subject of arranging our flowers there is just one question I should like to ask an intelligent British public, or that portion of it which manufactures china and earthenware. Why have we no scarlet pottery? Real scarlet, I mean—the scarlet of the pillar-box, only just a tone or two darker. Just think of oddly-shaped, tall vases in a glazed pottery of this sort filled with annunciation lilies, and squat bowls (the latter should be three-handled) filled with lilies-of-the-valley and their adorable sheath-like leaves, on a table centre which should be of white satin, with white table glass and white candles in Jacobean silver candlesticks with shades of just the same hue as the vases, and tell me if it wouldn't cheer one, no matter how deep down in the dumps one might be? Will not some china manufacturer who wishes also to be a benefactor to his kind adopt the idea? I'm certain the vases would sell; especially in the dull, grey November and December weather, when a gleam of bright colour, whether it be in a hat or gown, in furniture or ornaments, is always so acceptable.

I don't think we prize warm colours as highly as we should in England. The taint of the old-time Puritanism is over us all yet, and a scarlet handkerchief round a child's head, or a great

glowing rose in the hair if worn in the daytime, is voted vulgar and bad form. Really I believe the English are the one solitary nation under the sun who scout God's precious gift of colour and laugh it to scorn; and yet nowhere on earth is there such crying need of it as in this dull, grey England of ours, with its long, drab streets, and its dreary, dark houses, and its sky with fifty tears of rain to one smile of sunshine. Why, we ought by rights to just run riot in colour if we did our duty as citizens of the world. But no, we will, as a general thing, have none of it; for, as I have said before, that Puritan taint is still strong in our blood. Though why in Puritan times a lack of colour was supposed to be pleasing to the God who created it passes my comprehension.

My pen has run away again, and we are no nearer to a rational discussion as to the best way of arranging our blooms when we have got them. Perhaps, though, the subject demands a fresh chapter to itself, for in this we have wandered away to many things, and all the while our roses are rebelling at being so neglected!

CHAPTER II.

THE ARRANGEMENT OF FLOWERS (*continued*).

HOW TO PRESERVE FLOWERS.

WE will suppose now that the question of vases or specimen glasses has been satisfactorily settled. This being so, the next thing to be done is to plan out the scheme of decoration.

Before going on to this, however, just the promised word *re* the arranging of the flowers to the best advantage.

Old-fashioned people, and those wishful of making the flowers last as long as possible, generally use water; and there is no better plan for preserving their freshness, if you have either a plenitude of flowers, or, failing these, employ, as I have already said, narrow-necked vases. Otherwise wet sand will be found to give the best results. The vases or glasses, as the case may be, should be filled rather more than three-parts full. Then the flowers must not be put too closely together, but as gracefully as possible.

Wet moss, when it is to be had, admirably serves the same purpose, only that in this case

the flowers require wiring. This "sounds difficult" I know to the amateur would-be florist, but it is not so in reality. The following is the approved method :—

Take two reels of wire; one thick, one thin. The wire can be bought at any good ironmonger's. The thicker kind, which is called stubb wire, is used, so to speak, to strengthen the flower and to form an artificial stalk, when the flowers in question have only short stalks, or, as in the case of heavy-headed flowers, to support the head. Take then a suitable length of stubb wire and pierce the top of the stalk close to the bud. Be careful to do this as nearly as possible in the centre, then turn down the upper end very lightly yet firmly—*i.e.*, the end which has gone through the flower. Next take a piece of the very fine wire and twist it firmly, yet not tightly, round the stalk of the flower and the piece of stubb wire. This will give a solid and yet pliable stem, which can easily be bent in any direction you please. Have the vases filled with the wet moss, and then insert the wired flowers and foliage, etc. Ferns may be wired in precisely the same way, but the piece of stubb wire should pierce the stem close, yet not too close, to where the leafage begins. For maidenhair fern, however, which has a very delicate stalk, only the finest kind of wire should be used, as the stubb wire is too coarse. By-the-way, it is worth while to note that the latter

wire may be bought, if liked, already cut into useful lengths; in fact I think it always should be so bought, unless you happen to possess a pair of "wire scissors," as ordinary scissors are practically useless for this purpose.

When using moss to fill your vases, etc., it may be as damp as you please—indeed, the damper the better; but if sand is to be employed, you should take care that, though thoroughly moist, it is not too moist, as in the latter case you might as well fill the vases with water at once; remember it should be damp, not wet.

Your flowers duly wired, you may set about arranging them. In this connection it is well to bear in mind that you should never overdo things where flowers are concerned. Because you happen to have a profusion of blooms, that in itself is no reason why you should pack them so tightly into your vases, bowls, or glasses that all their individual beauty is, if not hidden, at least almost entirely obscured.

Flowers should always be arranged as lightly as possible if they are to appear at their best; and, moreover, each single blossom should be so placed that it can be seen as well as its fellows. This at first is not, I know, easy of achievement, but a little practice soon makes perfect here as in other things. The best plan is to mentally divide your vase or bowl into four parts, and then to see that as nearly as possible each part contains the same

number of blooms. This will of itself give a certain symmetry and grace—more especially if you are careful to intermix the foliage, whether of the flowers or ferns, if the latter be used, as evenly as possible.

As regards the flowers themselves, we might here, I think, well learn a valuable lesson from the Japanese, who are admittedly the first (artistic) florists in the whole world. They never commit the vulgar error of grouping some half-dozen different varieties of the same flowers—all of them of violently opposing colours to each other—in one unharmonious whole, as is the wont of the amateur florist in England and elsewhere.

At the very outside they never use but two blooms at one and the same time, and the result is something which has to be seen to be believed, I assure you.

Take a hint from them, O amateur florist with small means at your disposal for the purchase of flowers, if you would achieve an artistic success with your limited number of blossoms. The result, I am sure you will say, will be so much more satisfactory that you will want to repeat the experiment as a regular thing.

Among the flowers which accord amiably with each other, however, will be found the following:—

1. Wallflowers and forget-me-nots.
2. Pale yellow roses and violets.
3. Pink sweet-peas and lavender.

4. Scarlet geraniums and the pale mauve variety of the Parma violet.

5. Yellow parrot tulips and the green-flecked sort and lilies-of-the-valley.

6. Scarlet poinsettias and pale mauve violets.

7. Scarlet gladioli and the deep purple-blue iris.

If you wish for a table in varying shades of yellow try the different sorts of daffodils, such as the ordinary wild variety, intermingled with double daffodils and those known as the princessa, and big branches of yellow mimosa; or better still, if you can get them, as you sometimes can, sprays of yellow catkin. This effect, too, is one which has to be seen before it can be properly appreciated. No mere words and no ordinary pen can hope to picture even faintly its glory of yellow and grey-green sheen.

The deep blue cornflowers, too, are kindly inclined towards the big scarlet poppies. This, I am aware, savours of the commonplace, but intermix them with the green and wavy oaten grass you may find on every flower-woman's basket when the three are in season, and you have a bit of Dame Nature herself, and who amongst us dare call Nature commonplace?

I might extend this list almost indefinitely; indeed, I hope to do so later, but that must come when we are fairly on to the subject of colour schemes. For the present let the above suffice, and let us consider next just how much we

mean to spend upon our dinner-table decorations, and what are the cheapest varieties of flowers to buy at different seasons.

Nowadays flowers may be bought in the winter and early spring seasons almost as cheaply, unless the weather has been very rough, as in the late spring, and the summer and autumn.

For instance, in November quite a large bunch of yellow chrysanthemums is obtainable for 8d. or 9d., and a bunch of scarlet berberus leaves for 3d. or 4d. I specify yellow, but the white, scarlet, copper-coloured, and heliotrope varieties of the same flower may all be had as cheaply. Dahlias of the big, double variety, in scarlet or white, are 9d. and 1s. per bunch of very fair size. Narcissus are to be had as cheaply at 3d. and 4d. a bunch. True, the bunches are but small, yet still a shilling's-worth intermingled with fourpennyworth or sixpennyworth of asparagus ferns makes a brave show when daintily arranged in the Benares ware aforementioned.

Violets in bunches of varying sizes cost from 1d. to 3d. per market bunch. Yellow roses are rather dear. You must give at least half-a-crown for a handful of decent size; and lilies-of-the-valley are also dear, or may be counted so by the owners of slenderly-lined purses.

But to return for a moment to the question of chrysanthemums, those of the glorious giant variety are to be had from $1\frac{1}{2}$ d. each, and half-a-dozen inter-

mixed with one of the 9d. bunches I have just told you of, and, say, 3d. worth of berberus leaves will be ample for a very dainty table decoration indeed. After all, the amount of flowers really matters but little; it is the taste and grace with which they are arranged that tells.

I mentioned asparagus fern just now, but in November it is perhaps hardly to be recommended. It has then grown coarse and strong, and as a consequence has lost much of the delicate featheriness which is its principal and most charming attribute.

An investment, however, which I can strongly recommend at this special season of the year is a bunch of honesty, or "silver penny" as some people call it. It will cost you say about 2s. for a bunch of fair size, but then it is practically everlasting if you take proper care of it, and lock it up out of the dust when not actually in use; and it is, moreover, a most valuable adjunct to table decoration.

SCHEME I.

I know of scarcely anything prettier than a table with a white satin or pale green satin centre-slip and tall Nuremberg glass filled with white chrysanthemums of the feathery, not the close kind, silverpenny, and white narcissi. The table glass should be Nuremberg also, and the candle shades, if candles be used, of either white, pale green—and the latter only if a green table

centre is in use—or else rose pink; while for goodies you have the white variety of dragées and white fondants.

You will notice perhaps that I do not quote bonbons of a very costly sort; but then I am presuming that as you cannot afford to spend a great deal on flowers, the latest and most expensive novelties in the world where sweetmeats dwell are also beyond your reach; and really, you know, dragées are very nice, and most people who possess a sweet tooth like them.

SCHEME 2.

Another very pretty table might also be arranged with scarlet dahlias, or chrysanthemums of the same hue, and silverpenny. The table centre should be of mauve velvet, the table glass of the scarlet Bohemian variety, the sweets scarlet and mauve, and the candle shades scarlet.

Don't select mauve for the latter, because it casts such an unbecoming reflection, and then your guests, or the female portion thereof, decidedly will not rise up and call you blessed, but the reverse.

SCHEME 3.

Here is another idea wherein mauve plays the principal part, and your bunch of honesty figures once more:—

Choose the pale pinky mauve chrysanthemums and intermix them with the aforesaid honesty and berberus leaves. Have tall Nuremberg glasses, or else the vases I have before recommended of the green Belgian pottery. Let the table slip be of faded lily-leaf green velvet, the sweets crystallized violets (four ounces of these latter need only cost you 6d.), and the tiny imitation sweet green peas, which are filled with a delicious liqueur, and are only, I think, some 1s. 6d. per pound.

The candle shades may be of pale green, if you please; but they had better be white, although green is by no means so unkind to the complexion as mauve.

SCHEME 4.

And here, too, is another idea whereby your bunch of honesty may be put to good account:—

Choose yellow chrysanthemums this time, or big yellow dahlias if you can get them. Have a table centre of ruffled Liberty gauze in a shade of yellow so deep that it almost deserves to be called orange. Liberty's term this particular shade "sunset yellow," I believe, but you may see for yourself when you go to purchase it. Arrange your dahlias and silverpenny in the tall Nuremberg glasses before mentioned, or, if you are so lucky as to possess a set, either genuine or imitation, in the Queen Anne glasses whereof I discoursed in the preceding chapter. Let the candle shades be of

pale yellow. Pleated silk has much to recommend it, but if it be too expensive, why there is a good deal to be said in favour of crinkled paper.

The sweets may be abricotines or nougatines—both of which are to be had moderately—in silver dishes; and the table glass should be either white or of Nuremberg green. Tie up your dinner rolls with pale yellow baby ribbon in true lovers' knots. When you see the effect, if you are not more than satisfied, why you must indeed be hard to please, not to say rather more than a trifle captious.

SCHEME 5.

Here is another suggestion. Beg, borrow, or steal a long copper coffee tray. Place it on a slip of mauve velvet. Fill the tallest and slimmest glasses you possess with your honesty and copper-coloured chrysanthemums intermixed. (Note.—Do not overdo the latter; a single large bloom to each of the side glasses should be sufficient.) Then fill a copper bowl with the flowers and leaves, place it in the centre of the tray, arrange the specimen glasses one at each of the four ends of the table slip and one at either end of the tray. Let the candle shades be of tawny-hued silk, as nearly as possible akin in shade to that of the flowers. Failing this, dispense with the shades altogether. The sweets should be the tawny brown *amandes brûlées*, in tiny copper or else Japanese or Oriental

dishes. Note.—If you use copper dishes, see that they are first duly lined with a dessert paper, and then indeed I think you may, when you look on your own handiwork, feel a certain amount of pardonable pride. Don't choose a foggy evening for this special scheme of decoration.



No. 2.—AUTUMN TABLE. See page 149.

CHAPTER III.

SOME "DON'TS" FOR AMATEUR FLORISTS.

THE following rules should always be borne in mind when arranging flowers:—

Don't try to pack too many flowers into one glass, under the mistaken idea that you are giving the onlooker the impression of a profusion of flowers. You will only spoil what might be a good effect by doing so.

Don't fill your glass too full of water. About three-parts full is the right quantity.

Don't use over-moist sand.

Don't use moss without moistening it well.

Don't omit to change the water in your specimen glasses every day.

Don't forget that a pinch of powdered charcoal added to the water will make all flowers last quite twice as long as they would otherwise do.

Don't forget to clip the split ends of the flower stalks when you change the sand or water in your vases.

Don't wire flowers if you can possibly arrange them well without doing so. They wither more quickly when wired.

Don't, when purchasing, allow a half-withered bunch of flowers to be palmed off upon you because it happens to be of double the size that the fresh bunches are. Better a few fresh blooms than a whole basketful of semi-faded ones.

Don't buy lilac if the leaves are half-withered; it is not fresh.

Don't buy ready-wired roses.

Don't buy a bunch of flowers if the stalks of the latter are mounted—*i.e.*, with moss, ferns, and wire.

Don't attempt to "mount" flowers yourself without previous professional instruction. You may regret it if you do, for amateur mounting is not as a rule very successful. And finally—

Don't mix half-a-dozen heterogeneous blooms together without any reference as to colour, etc. It costs no more to buy flowers whose tints accord than it does to get assorted blooms which will all, figuratively speaking, shriek at each other. Yet this is precisely the error that most amateur florists commit unawares.

Patronize the same flower-woman as a regular thing if you would be well served, and don't try to "beat her down"—this practice only results in the prices being put up immediately she sees you approaching. You will notice that I say "flower-woman," not "florist." The reason is obvious, since the florist, having rates, rent, taxes, assistants' wages, and a thousand other items to pay, is prac-

tically forced to charge a higher price for his flowers; whilst the flower-woman, whose stock in trade consists of her basket of blooms, can naturally afford to sell cheaply.

And now to revert to the scale of prices charged during the various seasons.

With winter we have already dealt, and the autumn prices and flowers are practically the same, except that asters are generally very cheap, and chrysanthemums, when they are coming in, rather dearer. In the early spring there are the exquisite varieties of anemones—pale pink, scarlet, white, and mauve blue, which come chiefly from Nice and the Scilly Isles, I believe, and when plentiful they may be bought as cheap as 3d. per bunch. A shilling's-worth of those intermixed with leaves will form a very tolerable table decoration. Try the effect in your Benares vases. I think there is no doubt but that you will like it.

Then there are the daffodils, loveliest of all possible flowers. Could one ask for better? I trow not. And speaking personally, when daffodils are in season, I ask for no variety so far as the flowers themselves are concerned.

Of course when first they make their appearance to fill “the winds of March with beauty,” daffodils are rather dear; but when at their best, quite a large bunch may be bought of either the single or double variety for as low as 3d. or 4d. For the sum of 2s. 6d.—unless you wish to indulge in

the more costly kinds such as the "Princess," "Mrs. Watkins," etc.—quite a profusion of blooms may be bought, amply sufficient indeed for an elaborate table scheme.

The yellow jonquils, too, make their appearance about this time, and may be bought very cheap. Hyacinths also, for those who care for these rather stiff flowers, may be purchased for 9d. and a 1s. per bunch.

A little later come the primroses, prettiest and most moderately priced of all the spring flowers. For 2d. you may become possessed of a large bunch, so that a shilling judiciously expended will yield very good results, and there are few things prettier than a primrose table.

SCHEME 6.

The centre slip should be of palest yellow, or white Liberty silk gauze, the bonbon dishes of silver, and, if possible, the vases to contain the primroses should be the tall, slender, untarnishable plated silver ones. These, I may remark *en passant*, can be bought very cheaply, and with glass fitment complete cost only about a 1s. each. A bowl to match may be placed in the centre of the table slip; or, if this be thought rather too expensive, an ordinary rustic basket with a tall handle should be purchased and silvered over. The stuff for silvering can be bought at any oil-

man's; it costs but 6d. per packet, and is very easily applied.

If you do not like the idea of the silver specimen glasses, tiny baskets or hampers with the lids off might be similarly treated and placed one at each of the four corners of the table centre, one at each end, and one at each of the four corners of the table. The candles should be pale yellow in hue, and in silver candlesticks, while the candle shades should be of either white or pale yellow silk to match the table slip. The sweets may be either the yellow nougatines or abricotines before mentioned, or else pale yellow fondants or chocolates with yellow icing. A nice variety too, upon the ordinary hackneyed sweets, may be made by using glacéed tangerines, or apricots in their place; and there is a sweet made of iced and preserved melon, which is also of a pale yellow hue, and is moreover, besides being eminently delicious, very moderate in price, costing as it does but 1s. 6d. per pound. A pound should be bought at a time, and then the tiny squares may be cut from it as required.

SCHEME 7.

Another exceedingly pretty table scheme wherein primroses figure could be worked out thus:—

The centre slip should be of pale Parma violet mauve, the silvered baskets before referred to being filled with primroses and violets mixed.

The candles should be of pale mauve wax, with shades of yellow silk in as nearly as possible the shade of the primroses, and the sweets may be as I have just described, but should be intermixed with crystallized violets.

Many people imagine these are very costly, but such is not really the case. A pound may be bought for 1s. 8d. or 2s., and only a very few are required at a time.

SCHEME 8.

Another pretty scheme might be worked out in primroses and mauve anemones, the table centre being of deep orange linen plush (note—the latter runs 50 inches wide, and only costs 2s. 11d. per yard, so you see I am not by any means running you into extravagance), outlined with a conventional design in yellow braid lace. Utilize your silver bonbon dishes, and any quaint silver spoons you may be so fortunate to possess. The candles should be as described in the foregoing scheme, but the shades may be of orange silk in place of the pale yellow.

SCHEME 9.

Yet another scheme could be worked out with pale and deep mauve anemones only, omitting the primroses. Use the silvered baskets, and let the candle shades be of the orange silk. The sweets

may be of the mauve and yellow sort, and the table slip should be of the orange linen plush aforesaid.

SCHEME 10.

White anemones intermixed with kingcups look excellently well upon an orange slip, especially if contained in the silvered baskets I have above described. The sweets in this case should be white and pale yellow.

CHAPTER IV.

SUMMER TABLES.

So much for the purely spring flowers. When we come to all the wealth of the summer the taste of the amateur florist is rendered a good deal easier.

In early summer, for instance, there are sweet-peas, pink, white, and variegated, and a very beautiful table might be arranged as follows, at very small cost:—

SCHEME I I.

Get a bunch (a 6d. bunch will be ample) of the lovely gypsophillea, or else “Star of Bethlehem,” and, say, three or four bunches of white sweet-peas. Let the centre slip be of the palest green satin, a lily-leaf green, embroidered in a conventional design of lotus buds. The centre-piece should be a tall and slender vase of Nuremberg glass filled with the white sweet-peas and the “Star of Bethlehem.” (Note.—The stalks of the sweet-peas must be wired, as otherwise they will probably be too short to arrange effectively in a glass of the above description.) Arrange the flowers as lightly as you possibly can, and aim at getting a delicate feathery effect. On no account

crowd the flowers or try to pack them tightly, as if you do your table, instead of being a success, will probably be just the reverse. Each individual spray of the "Star of Bethlehem" should be given a chance to assert itself.

Let four similar but very much smaller vases be filled to match and placed at each of the four corners of the table slip, and a low bowl (or a squat rock glass will do) filled in the same manner in front of the host and hostess respectively. The sweets should be the pale green peas which are filled with liqueur, and which cost 2s. a pound, and white dragées. The table glass should be white crystal, with pale green hock glasses, and the dinner rolls should be tied up with pale green ribbons.

If the idea of the flat centre slip is not liked, substitute one of green Liberty silk gauze in pale apple-green. The candles should be of pale green wax in silver candlesticks, and with white silk or white crinkled paper shades.

The above mixture of flowers will give an excellent white table if white gauze be substituted for the pale green in all instances—viz., white candles, white shades, white sweeties in silver dishes, etc.

SCHEME 12.

Another lovely summer table could be carried out with lilies-of-the-valley only. The centre slip should be of white gauze, the vases and centre-

piece of white Coalport china, with sweetie dishes to match. By the way, choose one of the beautiful white swans in the above ware; they only cost some 7s. 6d. or 8s. 6d. each, and are really exquisitely graceful and in excellent taste.

I know of nothing prettier than a white or yellow table—viz., white or yellow flowers arranged in this ware. Fill your swan centre-piece with the lilies-of-the-valley and their leaves for all foliage. Choose six little double bowls supported by Cupids, one for each end of the centre slip, one each to stand at either end of the table in front of the host and hostess. (Note.—These Cupids in the white imitation Coalport china only cost 11½d. each, so that the purchase of the six can hardly be called a ruinously extravagant one.) The sweets may be either white or pale green, and the table-centre either of white silk gauze, white satin, or pale green velvet or gauze. The candlesticks should be of the white Coalport china, two cupids supporting three candles. These, which cost a guinea the double set, can hardly be looked upon in the light of extravagance. The dinner rolls should be tied up with ribbons to match the centre.

SCHEME 13.

A rose table is lovely, though even in the height of summer it is rather more costly than if more ordinary flowers were used. The roses, too, require

wiring, unless you happen to possess a set of rose glasses fitted with proper perforated tops. But as these are rather expensive to buy—if you get the right sort, that is—I should personally advise wiring.

The following is a good scheme for a table carried out entirely in scarlet roses:—

Use your Benares bowls and vases, and fill them with wet sand. I advise the latter for the all-sufficient reason that sometimes these bowls are very far from water-tight, and there is nothing to my mind more aggravating than to find one's best cloth completely ruined for the nonce, and to discover perhaps only a few minutes before dinner that the table has to be entirely relaid. These kind of adventures are apt to ruffle the tempers of maid and mistress alike, and to necessitate a delay of at least a quarter of an hour. So in all cases where you are not absolutely sure that your bowls, vases, etc., are water-tight, I recommend wet sand.

In the present instance, if you can afford the outlay for flowers, I should advise your dispensing with a table centre. Use your biggest Benares bowl or vase as a centre-piece, arrange the other four vases one at each of the four corners of the middle of the table, and one at each end in front of host and hostess. Then take a sufficient number of the roses and their leaves and buds and proceed as follows:—Thread a darning needle with a length of fine wire sufficient to connect all the vases with the centre-piece, allowing it to droop a

little, and to finish off at either end of the table in the vases there placed. Then pass the needle carefully through the stalk and bud of each single rose in such a manner as to utilize the leaves also. The reason for this is obvious, since if you use roses only, you will require quite four or five times as many than if every bud and spray of leaves in good condition be called into requisition. Having got your long line of roses ready, secure one end of it to the vase at the top of the table as tightly as possible, then take the line straight to the centre-piece, secure it again, and from there pass it first to the right-hand vase then back to the bowl again, then to the next vase, and so on until all are connected with the centre bowl in long drooping chains, finishing up at the vase at the bottom of the table. Let your candles be of scarlet wax, with scarlet silk shades, and use, if you possess them, silver candlesticks; failing these, use brass candlesticks, which will match, in metal at least, your Benares ware. The sweets should be scarlet, and the menu cards of scarlet with white lettering, also scarlet table glass and dinner rolls tied up with scarlet ribbon. Personally, I should prefer that the scarlet roses should have no other foliage save their own, but if this does not meet with the reader's ideas, asparagus fern might be introduced with very good effect, and if smilax is obtainable a little of this could also be intermixed with the roses for wreathing.

SCHEME 14.

Another pretty table could be carried out on somewhat similar lines as regards the colour scheme by using scarlet geraniums in place of the roses. These, however, will be found rather more difficult to wire. Smilax intermixed with geraniums should be employed to make the connecting lines between the vases, as the geraniums do not lend themselves very kindly to this form of decoration.

SCHEME 15.

To revert for a moment to sweet-peas. A charming pink-and-green table might be carried out as follows:—

The table-cloth should be of green art linen with a deep hem-stitched border, the centre slip of pale green satin or pale green Liberty silk gauze, the vases of pale apple-green glass, filled with the sweet-peas and green oaten grasses. The sweets should be palest pink, the candles green wax, with pink silk shades, the dinner rolls tied up with green ribbon, and the menu cards of pale green with palest pink lettering.

SCHEME 16.

Another charming summer table might be accomplished by the aid of pink poppies in place of the sweet-peas and green oaten grasses. Use

tall *gris de Flandres* jugs (in plain pale grey, not those having blue introduced) to hold these, and let your table-cloth be of the green art linen aforesaid. Use a plain strip of grey velvet by way of centre slip—it should be of the exact shade of the *gris de Flandres* ware, however, or else you must use none of it, and in all other respects proceed exactly as described above.

SCHEME 17.

A parrot table is essentially a summer scheme, and one which is, moreover, as a rule, highly successful. It is certainly quite out of the common.

The table-cloth should be of green art linen. For a centre slip you must invest in a long strip of the parrot velvet¹: bright green parrots on a bright scarlet ground. Have a tall, slender Nuremberg glass by way of centre-piece. Fill it with scarlet poppies and tall green oaten grasses, and use your smaller vases of the same glass similarly filled. Sweets: bright scarlet and green liqueur peas. Tie the dinner rolls with ribbons to match, and let the menu cards be of bright green with scarlet lettering. Candles of scarlet wax in silver candlesticks—brass if preferred, and indeed I am not at all sure but that the latter is the most suitable—with scarlet silk or crinkled paper shades. Bright green candle shades, as I have before

¹ You can get velvet in this design at any art shop.

observed, should never be used, as they cast such an exceedingly unbecoming shade on the complexion.

SCHEME 18.

Another equally pretty and uncommon table is a sort of variant on the above, and is carried out as follows:—The table-cloth should be of green art linen; the table centre of parrot velvet, with a deep royal blue background instead of the red above described. In place of the poppies, use nothing but deep blue cornflowers and the tall green oaten grasses. The menu cards must be of deep green with blue lettering, and the sweets—as I fancy deep blue sweets are unobtainable unless made to order—must be of green, and contained in silver bonbon dishes. Apropos of the latter, housewives without a great deal of spare cash at their command, and with perhaps but a limited amount of silver, may urge that they do not possess these, and that they are too expensive to buy. This latter idea, as a matter of fact, is an erroneous one. Really beautiful little bonbon dishes of *real* silver may be bought, of good design, for as low as 3s. or 3s. 6d. each, and four or six are an ample quantity for a dinner-table capable of accommodating eight or ten people. Failing them, however, very dainty little bonbon dishes of Nuremberg glass can be bought

for 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. each at any art shop or at the stores. Four or six of the latter are also an ample quantity.

The candles should be of green wax and without shades, as blue is equally as unbecoming as green to the complexion. Tie the dinner rolls up with ribbons of the two shades, etc., to match.

SCHEME 19.

A parrot table may be also of the above three shades mixed—viz., scarlet poppies, deep blue cornflowers, and the tall green oaten grasses. In this case you should get a slip of the parrot velvet with a suggestion of red in the background. The candles should be of green wax, with scarlet shades, and the sweets green and scarlet, whilst the menu cards must be deep green with scarlet borders and deep blue lettering, the rolls, etc., being tied up with ribbons of the three colours.

SCHEME 20.

Another lovely summer table can be carried out like this:—The table-cloth should be of deep yellow art linen, the table slip of pale grey velvet, the centre-piece and smaller vases of plain *gris de Flandres* filled with yellow poppies and green oaten grasses, and long trails of smilax, which should be used to connect the centre-piece and the four or six smaller vases. The sweets should be pale and deep yellow abricotines and nou-

gaines in silver dishes. The candles, yellow wax in silver candlesticks, with shades of yellow silk or crinkled paper. The dinner rolls should be tied up with pale grey and yellow ribbons, and the menu cards must be grey with pale yellow lettering. Properly carried out, this idea is not only novel, but really charming in the extreme.

CHAPTER V.

COUNTRY TABLES.

SCHEME 21.

WHEN poppies are in season, and consequently cheap, few schemes can surpass a pink poppy table. For a luncheon it is ideal, and it is equally as pretty, if not prettier, by candle-light.

Every bit of fancy silver that you possess that is in any way suitable, or which can be made so, should be pressed into service. Then proceed thus:—

Let your centre slip be of plain pale pink satin, matching as closely as possible the shade of the poppies. Then get a large diamond-shaped zinc tin (and note that it should not stand more than, say, three or three and a half inches high), cover it tightly, on the outside only of course, with pale pink satin to match your table centre. Two similar but much smaller tins of the same shape should also be covered to match; then fill these with poppies and place them straight down the centre slip, the largest of course in the middle. If you possess or can buy some specimen glasses

with silver stems and feet, so much the better. Six will be required at least, and more if your table is a large one. Failing these, you must fall back upon tall, slender, white crystal glasses. Fill them with pale pink poppies and feathery and silver grasses, and arrange them in zig-zag fashion down the table. Use pale pink candles in silver candlesticks. Let your sweet dishes be silver, and have pale pink bonbons, menu cards of pale pink with silver lettering, and the salt-sticks, dinner rolls, etc., tied with pale pink ribbons. If shades are used for the candles, they should be of pale pink silk or crinkled paper also. The odd pieces of silver before referred to should be arranged to the best possible advantage on the centre slip. Really, when finished, I don't think you could find a prettier table anywhere, for the satin-covered zinc bowls, if properly arranged and filled, should give the impression of satin cushions covered with flowers.

This table could also be achieved by means of pale pink peonies, but the latter must first be stripped of their huge and somewhat ungainly leaves, and should moreover be wired, as they are rather heavy-headed, as well as heavy-leaved, and are apt to droop most ungracefully unless supported artificially. The zinc tins are obtainable either in diamond or oblong shape at any good ironmongers, and only cost a few pence. They should be filled with wet sand in preference

to water, as from their very make they are rather liable to leak occasionally.

SCHEME 22.

This table could also be carried out in yellow, if pink is not liked, by substituting a yellow satin slip, yellow poppies, etc., for the pink above indicated. And a pretty variation on either scheme might be made by using only two diamond-shaped tins, and utilizing a tall crystal glass filled with the giant poppies by way of centre-piece. I forget the exact name of these special poppies, but any florist will supply them when in season, though they are rather more expensive than the ordinary kind above described, which are to be had as cheaply as threepence a bunch. Two shillings'-worth of blooms and say two or three pennyworth of grasses will prove ample decoration for any ordinary-sized table. Of course if the latter is very large, zinc bowls of a larger size should be selected, and more specimen glasses will be required.

SCHEME 23.

A wild flower table is lovely; but, as a rule, it is not so successful in town as in the country, since all wild flowers do not bear the journey townwards with the same result. A very pretty butter-cup-and-daisy table might be arranged as follows:—

The centre slip should be of white satin embroidered at the edges with a conventional design of buttercups and daisies to a depth of, say, two and a half inches. A green rush basket filled with wet sand should form a centre-piece filled with buttercups, kingcups, daisies, and grasses; whilst vases of brown unglazed pottery similarly filled should stand one at either of the four corners of the centre slip, and one at each end of the table in front of host and hostess respectively. The tiny salt-jars of unglazed (or glazed, if preferred) rustic pottery which are now sold everywhere should be utilized as bonbon dishes, and the bonbons themselves should be white dragées, pale pink fondants, and pale yellow nougatines. The usual water carafes should be replaced for the nonce by rustic jugs of brown pottery, and, if possible, the rolls should be home-made to add to the general illusion of rusticity.

SCHEME 24.

Yet another very pretty rustic table might be carried out entirely in green, yellow, and brown; but this, of course, would be more suitable for a daylight than a lamplight scheme.

The table-cloth if possible should be of dull green art linen, the centre slip of plain brown velvet. Use a green rush basket filled with either buttercups or kingcups and green oaten grasses by

way of centre-piece. Flank it on either side and at either of the four corners of the centre slip by six vases of Belgian pottery filled in a similar manner. Tiny green bonbon dishes of the same pottery should be filled with pale green sweets and either chocolates or *amandes brûlées*.

The dinner-rolls should be tied up with green and yellow ribbons, and the menu cards should be of brown paper with a dull green border and yellow and green lettering. (Note.—You can make these at home if you use a good quality of brown paper, by the aid of a box of water-colours and a pot of green and yellow ink.) The green pottery sweetmeat dishes above referred to are really ash-trays, but make admirable sweetie dishes, and never betray their origin. In price they range at sixpence each; whilst the flower vases, as I have, I think, mentioned before, are to be had from one shilling each and upwards.

If liked, this table might be kept entirely to green and yellow, but personally I think the suggestion of brown—the right shade, mind you—is an improvement, and, to a certain extent, called for.

SCHEME 25.

For downright quaint prettiness, I do not think anything could beat the following carried out by the aid of the prim, old-fashioned little

flowers known as "bachelors' buttons." The table-cloth should be of white linen. The table-centre of white satin embroidered with a conventional design of the bachelors' buttons aforesaid. For the benefit of the uninitiated, I may state that the flowers known by this title are a species of pink-tipped double daisy. The centre-piece should be a low bowl of white Coalport china, supported by four Cupids, full of wet sand. Fill this with bachelors' buttons and mignonette, and place vases upheld by Cupids and similarly filled wherever there is an available space both on the centre slip and table-cloth. All these should be connected by strands of palest pink and white gauze ribbon, tied midway into a lovers' knot. The best way is to make the lovers' bow and ends separately, and then secure them to the looped strands by means of small pins; if this is done with care the artifice will never be detected, and less ribbon will in all probability be required.

The sweets should be pale pink and white dragées or fondants, and the rolls and salt-sticks should be tied up with the gauze ribbons. The candle shades, if candles are used, should be pale pink, and the candlesticks those I have previously described as being of white Coalport china.

A prettier floral scheme for, say, an engagement lunch or dinner it would, I think, be hard to find. This, too, is essentially a country table.

SCHEME 26.

Yet another equally pretty scheme could be carried out with the aid of the wild marsh-mallow, the pale mauve variety.

The centre slip should be of mauve velvet, of as nearly as possible the same shade as the flowers, and should be embroidered with a design of marsh-mallow leaves in long sprays, tied up with Louis Quinze bows of the same shade of green.

Vases of green Belgian pottery, filled with the marsh-mallow, should be arranged irregularly all over the table, the centre-piece being a bowl of the same ware similarly filled, and with long trails of the marsh mallow drooping over the sides.

The sweets should be of pale mauve in green pottery bonbon dishes, and the candles of mauve wax in green pottery candlesticks, but without shades, as neither green or mauve is a kindly colour to the feminine, or for the matter of that, to the masculine complexion. By the way, these candlesticks, which are of the before-mentioned Belgian pottery, are to be had very cheaply, at something under 3s. the pair, and when not in use are quite quaint and pretty enough to be used as ornaments.

SCHEME 27.

Another very pretty table, wherein the above flowers play the principal part, could be arranged

by using a centre slip of orange-coloured Liberty silk gauze in place of the mauve velvet. Stick to the green pottery vases for green marsh-mallow, but let the sweets be of orange and pale mauve, and the candles of pale mauve wax, with orange silk shades. If ribbons are employed for the dinner rolls—and personally I think this an exceedingly pretty fashion, as it helps one, so to speak, to carry out a certain scheme of colour more completely—mauve and orange should both be used. The menu cards for the first, all mauve and green table, should be of pale mauve and green lettering; and for the orange and mauve scheme, of mauve with orange lettering.

SCHEME 28.

The white marsh-mallow may also be used to form a pretty floral scheme; but in this case the table slip should be of pale green, the sweets green and white in hue, the candle shades of white, the menu cards of pale green with white lettering, the rolls and salt-sticks tied with white ribbon, whilst the vases which contain the flowers may be either of the green Belgian pottery or white Coalport china—whichever you like best.

SCHEME 29.

A forget-me-not table is charmingly pretty, but wants careful arranging. The centre slips should

be of pale blue Liberty silk gauze, and the centre-piece a white Coalport china bowl filled with forget-me-nots only. At either end of the centre slip, and at the four corners, white vases supported by Cupids should be filled with the same flowers. At each corner of the table flat, fan-shaped bunches of forget-me-nots, tied with pale blue ribbons in a lovers' knot, should be arranged.

The sweet dishes should be white Coalport china, filled with pale blue fondants and white nougatines.

The candles should be of pale blue wax, in white china candlesticks. The menu cards of white, with sprays of forget-me-nots painted in each corner, and pale blue lettering. The rolls, etc., should be tied up with pale blue ribbons, and the table glass of white crystal only, a spray of forget-me-nots being placed in each finger-bowl. This table, in addition to its charm, has another virtue to recommend it, since it is very economical. Even in town quite large bunches of forget-me-nots can usually be bought for 4d. or 6d., whilst in the country they are usually to be had for just the trouble of picking.

SCHEME 30.

Another equally pretty table might be composed of forget-me-nots and mignonette intermingled. Use the green Belgian pottery vases for the flowers.

A big bowl in the centre, or better still, a rustic green rough basket filled with mignonette, etc.; the green vases being similarly filled, and placed one at both ends of the table centre, and one at each of the four corners.

The table centre in this instance should be of silk gauze in a dull shade of green, as nearly as possible that of the mignonette leaves. The sweets should be of pale green, and pale blue fondants; the rolls, etc., being tied with strands of bébe ribbon in the two shades. The menu cards of dull green, with pale blue lettering; and the candles, of pale blue wax, should be placed in the green Belgian pottery candlesticks I have more than once described. Candle shades should be omitted.

Pretty as this scheme is, I must confess it is more suitable for a luncheon than a dinner table, as it does not look so well by lamplight as by daylight.

Among other country tables—*i.e.*, schemes wherein flowers of the commoner or wild class play the principal part—I may mention a marigold table, a bluebell or harebell table, and a broom or yellow gorse table.

SCHEME 31.

The marigold table is really lovely. Select, if possible, the marigolds with the big brown hearts in preference to the double and all yellow variety.

Let your table-cloth be of yellow art linen edged with a deep bordering of torchon lace; the centre slip of russet-brown velvet, worked with a conventional design in marigolds, yellow of course. Use your green Belgian pottery vases for the flowers, or better still, if you possess them, a set of quaint yellow and brown Devonshire pottery, which I have mentioned previously. Failing either of these, a large rustic basket may be used as a centre-piece, and four or six smaller ones for the ends and corners of the table slip might be utilized. The baskets may be either of green rush or of the usual brown plaited straw, whichever is preferred. Fill with marigolds and wild ferns—the most feathery sort obtainable. Let the bonbons be yellow in hue. The menu cards to be yellow, with brown lettering; but if economy has to be very closely studied, have these of brown paper with yellow border, and the menu written in yellow ink; a single marigold should be printed in one corner. To revert for a moment to the table-centre. If you do not like the idea of the brown velvet—and, indeed, unless it has the worked border it would be perhaps rather heavy and lacking in individuality—you might use instead a ruffled length of russet-brown silk gauze. Choose the duller hue of russet, not that with much yellow in it. But to go on, the candles should be of yellow wax, with silk or crinkled paper shades of just the hue of the marigolds; and the table glass, unless you are for-

fortunate enough to possess a complete set of this in the amber crystal (which, I may remark, is just the very thing for a yellow table, besides being both pretty and inexpensive), had better be all white. Though if you are using your green Belgian pottery vases, or the green or brown rush baskets, it might be Nuremberg with advantage; indeed, personally, I prefer the Nuremberg idea to that of the white, only I know many people have a prejudice in favour of white table glass.

SCHEME 32.

The bluebell table might be arranged as follows, but this, it must be borne in mind, is more of a daylight than a lamplight scheme:—

The table slip should be of lavender blue velvet, with a design of pale green tulips printed thereon. Ask at any art shop for a square of Voysey velvet in the tulip and bird design, and you will get what you want. Probable cost, say, 3s. or 3s. 6d. Use a squat bowl of *gris de Flandres* filled with the bluebells by way of centre-piece, and flank it on either side with tall, slender jugs of the *gris de Flandres* filled to correspond. (Note.—Intermix feathery fern with your bluebells, as this helps out the effect.) Place similar squat vases, also filled in the same manner, at all four corners of the table. Let the sweets be crystallized violets and pale blue fondants, and tie the rolls with lavender blue

ribbon, the menu cards being of lavender blue in hue, as this is the nearest you will get to the bluebells.

You must bear in mind, however, that as bluebells fade very quickly, they should only be gathered just before they are required. This scheme, as I have already said, is more suitable for a luncheon than a dinner table.

SCHEME 33.

Another equally pretty scheme, also more suitable for the lucky dwellers in the country, who have all the wealth of wild flowers at their very doors, is a cowslip table.

The table-centre should be of white Roman satin, with a design of cowslips and their leaves worked thereon. The centre-piece, a swan of white Coalport china filled with cowslips, and with a huge cowslip ball suspended from his beak. All country children know how to make cowslips' balls, so it would be superfluous to give directions here. White Coalport vases—six or eight in number, according to the size of your table,—supported by Cupids, should stand one at each end of the centre-piece, and one at each of the four corners of the table, and should be filled with cowslips, each little figure bearing in addition a cowslip ball suspended round his neck by means of a yellow ribbon. The sweets should be pale yellow, and the menu cards of white with yellow lettering, and a single cowslip

painted in the left-hand corner. The candles should be of yellow wax in white Coalport china candlesticks, with shades of pale yellow silk or crinkled paper. The rolls should be tied up with pale yellow ribbon, and a tiny cowslip ball should float in each finger bowl.

The table glass should be either of white crystal or green Nuremberg, and if you wish to preserve the illusion, you might serve a cowslip liqueur with your ices, if you have them, or failing this, with the after-dinner coffee. The liqueur may be made thus:—Mix half-a-bottle of cognac with half-a-bottle of cowslip wine, pour it over four ounces of sifted sugar, and leave for a few days, stirring occasionally in order that the sugar may dissolve better. Then bottle and use as required.

Note.—The cowslip balls above referred to should only be made just before they are required. The above is, as I have said, essentially a “country table,” for though in their season cowslips are to be had in town, and had cheaply, yet, as they are of the order of flowers which wither very quickly, they are practically half-faded by the time they reach the London market, and are therefore not to be had, and cannot be seen, at their best.

SCHEME 34.

When other flowers are unobtainable, or something a little novel is desired, try a gorse table.

Carefully executed, it is both original and pretty. If possible, the table-cloth should be of green art linen, with a drawn thread border. And, by the way, I shall have more to say anon respecting these same table-cloths of art linen: where they may be bought, the price, etc.

The centre slip must be of faded orange velvet, and should be bordered with the gorse. If the latter will not "lie" properly, wire it, using for the purpose the finest wire you possess. Fill a flat bowl or a big green rush basket full of gorse and use this as centre-piece, smaller baskets or similar bowls being placed at each of the four corners of the table, and one at either end of the centre slip in front of host and hostess respectively. If baskets are used, tie a big bow of yellow ribbon in the shape of a true-lovers' knot on the handle of each. Use your Belgian pottery candlesticks, and let them contain yellow wax-candles with yellow silk shades. The menu cards should be of yellow with green lettering, the bonbons yellow in green Belgian pottery sweetie dishes, and a little tuft of gorse should float in each finger bowl, whilst the table glass should be of green Nuremberg, and the dinner rolls and salt-sticks tied with yellow or green bébe ribbon, or strands of both, if you wish to carry out the scheme as completely as possible. If liked, brown rush baskets or rustic brown bowls and jugs might be utilized to hold the gorse instead of the Belgian pottery vases above indicated, or

Nuremberg glass would serve the same purpose with really excellent effect. The scheme, however, if it is to be worked out successfully, should, I think, be kept entirely to green and yellow, or green, brown, and yellow.

SCHEME 35.

A very pretty autumn country table might be accomplished by means of rowanberries, as follows:—

The table-cloth should be of scarlet linen, edged with torchon lace; or, if scarlet linen is unobtainable, use your green art linen table-cloth in its stead. Let the table slip be of coarse *écru* lace, and use the Belgian pottery bowls and vases filled with the rowanberries and their leaves, and long trailing sprays of variegated ivy.

Sprays of the latter should also be used to connect the centre-piece with the smaller vases and bowls, and long trails intermixed with the rowanberries might be flatly pinned to the cloth. The sweets should be scarlet. The menu cards scarlet with dull green lettering, and the candles green wax in the Belgian pottery candlesticks, and with scarlet silk shades. Ribbons for salt-sticks and rolls to be scarlet also.

SCHEME 36.

In spring a charming yellow table can be evolved by the aid of laburnum; the centre slip in this

case being of yellow or white silk gauze. If the former is used, the table-cloth should be of the ordinary white variety; but if the latter, then let me urge upon you the charms of a dull yellow art linen bordered with torchon lace.

Use your Nuremberg glasses, and fill them with the laburnum blooms and leaves. They may perhaps require a little wiring, but this only refers to the inner flowers; the outer rows should be allowed to droop at their own sweet will, as a much more graceful effect is thereby obtained.

The sweets must be pale yellow, the candles yellow wax in silver candlesticks, with candle shades of yellow silk, and the menu cards of white or yellow with yellow or white lettering. Tie the rolls with yellow gauze ribbons, as this makes a change from the eternal bébe sort.

SCHEME 37.

Another pretty tree table might be carried out by means of acacia blooms.

This should be kept entirely to white and mauve, if for a daylight scheme. If for dining by candlelight, to mauve and yellow.

In the first-named case let the table-cloth be of white damask or linen, edged with torchon lace; the table slip of silver or mauve gauze; the centre-piece a silver bowl filled with the acacia blooms and their leaves. Failing a silver bowl, a basket

silvered over in the manner I have already described might be utilized. Tiny silver vases or white crystal specimen glasses with silver stems should be dotted here and there, irregularly, down the length of the centre slip, and four others should occupy each end of the table. If you lack the vases, smaller "silvered" baskets must take their place, and at each corner of the table-cloth an ordinary white finger bowl, filled with acacia blooms in such a manner that the bowl is entirely concealed, should stand also. The menu cards should be pale mauve with silver lettering, or better still, white with mauve lettering, and a spray of acacia painted in the left-hand corner.

The candle shades used should be white silk, but personally I prefer mauve wax candles (*without* shades) in silver candlesticks.

The sweets should be pale mauve and silver chocolates, the dinner rolls, etc., being tied with mauve gauze or bébé ribbons, and the table glass should be pure white crystal.

If you happen to have by you a big bunch of silverpenny in good condition, this might be intermixed with the acacia blooms and leaves with very good effect.

SCHEME 38.

A lovely scarlet and mauve table could also be carried out by means of acacia blooms intermixed

with scarlet geraniums and their leaves. In this case the table slip, if liked, could be of scarlet gauze, the sweets being scarlet fondants and mauve nougatines or violets; the dinner rolls being tied with two strands of ribbon, mauve and scarlet; the menu cards mauve with scarlet lettering, and the table glass entirely of scarlet Bohemian make. Stick to the silver bowls or baskets to hold the flowers, and if you possess the silverpenny utilize this also. Any quaint scraps of old silver, tiny trays, bowls, spoons, etc., you may own should also be called into requisition, and arranged on the gauze centre slip will add to the general effect. This also may be called a very inexpensive floral scheme, for many dwellers even in the London suburbs are the proud possessors of an acacia tree, whose blooms are rarely if ever utilized in the above manner, simply because they do not happen to think of the matter.

CHAPTER VI.

TREE TABLES.

A VERY pretty table may also be achieved by the aid of elderberry flowers, although it seems almost a pity to put them to such a purpose when one remembers the delicious cordial known as elderberry wine they are capable of producing. Still, for those who lack the skill or the inclination to compound this, here is the scheme referred to. The table slip should be of faded green Liberty velveteen, or else of Liberty ruffled gauze of the same shade. Tall Nuremberg glasses should contain the flowers, which must be mixed with a plenitude of asparagus fern and, if procurable, "Star of Bethlehem." Only the tender shoots of leaves should be left with the flowers, as otherwise the effect will be, I fear, somewhat clumsy.

The sweets should be pale green and white, the menu cards white with pale green lettering, and the table glass white crystal, with hock glasses of bright pale green. If ribbons are used for the dinner rolls and salt-sticks, these should be pale green also. Note.—As the blossoms are so big, care must be

taken not to over-fill the vases, or pack the blooms too tightly.

SCHEME 39.

A really lovely table could be carried out with the aid of the pink-and-white blossoms of the horse-chestnut tree. In this case the table slip should be of coarse *écru* lace; use the largest Nuremberg glass you possess by way of a centre-piece, and fill it with the pink-and-white blooms intermixed. (Note.—These should be wired with the “stubb” wire in the manner before described, as otherwise they will be found rather unamenable to graceful arrangement.) Do not put any of their foliage with them, as this is both big and clumsy, but use in its place plenty of asparagus fern. If the latter is unobtainable, silverpenny may be made to take its place with admirable effect. The sweets should be pale pink dragées and cream-coloured fondants, and at each of the four corners of the table place a big bunch of the cream-and-pink blossoms tied with a lovers’ knot of pink ribbon in as nearly as possible the shade of the blooms themselves. A tiny tuft of bloom should also be placed in each finger-bowl. The table glass should be green Nuremberg only, the menu cards of dull cream with pink lettering, and the rolls, etc., tied up with ribbon to match that holding the flowers. If the admixture of cream and pink is not liked,

the flowers might be all pink or all cream, whichever is preferred. In the latter case the table slip should, I think, be of either pale green or scarlet, and in the former of a shade of pink as nearly as possible matching that of the flowers. A pure white slip should not be used with the creamy flowers, as this would have the effect of making the latter look rather dirty.

Note.—When arranging this scheme great care must be taken not to overdo the amount of blooms, or the vases will present a top-heavy appearance.

SCHEME 40.

Another lovely mauve table might be arranged with the aid of wisteria, than which there are no lovelier blossoms. In this instance I would advise you to dispense with a table slip, and for a centre-piece proceed as follows:—Take a large-sized dinner-plate—the larger the better—and fill it with very wet moss; then turn a big saucer upside-down and let the dinner-plate stand on this. Fill it so that the moss is quite covered with the wisteria blooms and leaves, and then arrange from these long trails of the wisteria in such a manner that the saucer is completely hidden. A little wire may be used if thought necessary, but usually it is possible to do without this. Trails of wisteria must be so managed that the whole table is practically covered with them, only sufficient space being left

between for the dinner-plates, knives and forks, glasses, etc. The effect should be that of a huge star-shaped decoration, the empty spaces being left between the points of the star. Flat vases, or specimen glasses, preferably of Nuremberg, should be placed here, there, and everywhere as irregularly as possible. The sweets, of course, must be pale mauve, and the bonbon dishes should be silver.

If for a candlelight table, the candles should be of mauve wax, in silver candlesticks. The menu cards must be mauve with silver lettering, and the rolls, etc., should be tied up with mauve ribbons. This is one of the prettiest decorations possible for a small dinner party, as, being flat, it enables conversation to become general, rather a difficult matter when one cannot see one's opposite neighbour.

The above scheme, though, would only be practicable for those who are fortunate enough to possess a wisteria vine.

SCHEME 41.

Yet another wild-flower table could be charmingly achieved with wild clematis, or, for the matter of that, with the cultivated, if wild is not forthcoming.

In this case I think the table centre should be of either bright scarlet—I am presuming that the purple clematis is to be used—or deep orange.

Use a large dinner-plate filled with wet moss, as described in the foregoing scheme, and let it stand on an inverted saucer. Smaller saucers filled with the wet moss should stand one at each of the four corners of the table, and the clematis must be arranged in one and all of them in such a manner that their domestic and humble origin is completely hidden. If a scarlet table-slip be used, a judicious mixture of scarlet geraniums skilfully introduced will lend more brightness to the table. The clematis should be arranged in long trails, as before described, so that very little, if any, of the table-cloth is visible, except just that portion occupied by the plates, knives, and forks, etc. The sweets must be mauve and scarlet, menu cards mauve with scarlet lettering, or *vice versâ*, and the dinner rolls tied up with strands of the two ribbons, the table glass, both in this and the foregoing scheme being of white crystal. If an orange-hued centre-slip is used in place of the scarlet, the sweets, etc., should be deep yellow, as nearly orange as is procurable, and mauve, the menu cards mauve with orange lettering, the rolls tied with ribbons of the two colours, and the table glass preferably Nuremberg.

SCHEME 42.

A lovely lavender table might be carried out as follows:—The table slip should be of bright scarlet

silk gauze, ruffled as lightly and artistically as possible. A copper bowl filled entirely with lavender, and nothing else, should serve for a centre piece, and specimen glasses of a Queen Anne pattern, or quaint little copper vases, if you can get hold of any, should be similarly filled and dotted here and there.

At the four corners of the table place flat fan-shaped bunches of lavender tied with true lovers' knot bows of scarlet ribbon. The bonbon dishes should be of copper—the flat fancy ash-trays in quaint, odd shapes sold at any art shop for 6½d. each will serve your purpose most admirably; but they must be lined with a fancy dessert paper before the goodies are put in, or else the latter should be each in its little paper case,—the sweets of scarlet and mauve, and before each guest two or three sticks of lavender tied together with a scarlet ribbon should be placed. The menu cards must be of mauve with the lettering in scarlet, and the dinner rolls should be tied with scarlet ribbon. Table glass of scarlet and Nuremberg, and in each finger-bowl a stump of lavender should float. To those who are fortunate enough to live in or near the lavender districts, or who possess a bed of lavender, this scheme should commend itself; but to dwellers in towns I fear the idea is not so practicable, as it is mostly the dried lavender which comes their way.

SCHEME 43.

Have you ever tried a table composed entirely of mignonette? I can assure you that it is charming in the extreme.

The table slip should be of dull green velvet, with a big, green Belgian pottery bowl filled entirely with mignonette by way of a centre-piece. Vases of the same ware should be dotted about here and there, as irregularly as possible, and filled with mignonette. Long trails of smilax should outline the table centre, and at each corner of the table a big bunch of mignonette, tied first with wire so as to hold them firm, and secondly with a long trail of smilax in the best imitation of a true lovers' knot and long ends you can achieve should be securely pinned. The bunches should be arranged in such a manner—viz., with the stalks pointing towards the leg of the table, that the ends of the smilax will fall over the table-cloth and hang down. The effect, properly carried out, is exceedingly pretty, for the table appears to be draped in smilax. The sweets should be pale green, the menu cards green with pinky lettering, and the table glass throughout of Nuremberg. The rolls, if ribbons are used, must be tied with pale green. The sweet dishes should be of the green Belgian pottery in preference to silver. This scheme is more suitable for a luncheon than a dinner table,

as by candle-light it would, I fear, be apt to look rather dingy.

SCHEME 44.

Another pretty and uncommon luncheon table might be worked out by combining nasturtiums with the mignonette. Let the table centre be of flame coloured velvet, as nearly as possible the shade of the flowers themselves. Use the green Belgian pottery bowls and vases, the biggest bowl you possess as a centre-piece, filled with mignonette and nasturtium flowers and leaves, and long trails of the latter should be allowed to hang over the sides of the bowl and vases. Flat sprays of the nasturtiums should be placed at each corner of the table. The table glass must be Nuremberg, and in each finger-bowl place a single nasturtium flower.

The sweets, since flame-coloured goodies are, I fancy, unobtainable, should be of pale green. The menu cards pale green with flame-coloured lettering, and the rolls tied up with velvet ribbons in the two colours. Flame-coloured gauze may be used in place of the velvet. This, too, is more of a daylight than a lamplight decoration, and is perhaps like the mignonette table before described, more suitable for a luncheon than a dinner table.

When flowers are scarce or not to be obtained, either in town or country, try the following.



No. 3.—SPRING TABLE. See page 150.

SCHEME 45.

Foliage Table.—It is equally suitable for either a luncheon or a dinner, and for either autumn or winter.

Let the table centre be of bright scarlet or pale mauve gauze. Use either green Belgian pottery vases or Nuremberg specimen glasses. A large one for the centre-piece, eight or ten smaller ones—according to the size of the table—to be placed, one at each corner of the centre slip, and one at each corner of the table. Fill these entirely with feathery ferns, grasses of all sorts, trailing ivy, and, if obtainable, asparagus ferns. In spring, yellow catkins or young tree shoots; in later spring, with the young leaves and blossoms of the lime tree; and in autumn with berberus, virginia creeper, red or copper-beech leaves, etc. All the leaves should be arranged as lightly as possible, and if this is properly done the effect should quite equal that of even the prettiest of flower tables.

The sweets should be scarlet or mauve (according to the colour of the table slip) and green, and be contained in either the green pottery dishes or in tiny Nuremberg ones, according to the vases used.

Rolls and salt-sticks to be tied with scarlet and green ribbons; table glass of Nuremberg, and scarlet menu cards with green lettering.

SCHEME 46.

A lovely table done entirely in white and green could be carried out with lime-tree blossoms and the young leaves and buds. The centre-slip should be of white satin, white cut glasses should hold the young leaves and blossoms, the sweets to be pale green and white, the menu cards pale green with white lettering, the dinner rolls tied with pale green ribbons, and the candles of green wax in silver candlesticks, with white silk or crinkled paper shades. The leaves, of course, must be arranged with the greatest possible care, or a heavy and dowdy effect will be the result. A variation on the above might be obtained by using the blossoms only, in conjunction with the asparagus fern or smilax. As the stalks to the blooms are very short, they will require wiring to enable them to appear to advantage.

SCHEME 47.

A lovely table can also be arranged with yellow catkins and small variegated ivy. Let long trails of the latter hang over the sides of the vases or glasses, outline the table centre, and be arranged in flat sprays, tied with yellow ribbon, at each corner of the table. The sweets in this case might be pale yellow, and the table slip should be either grey-green velvet or as near as possible the shade of the catkins, or of pale yellow gauze. Candle

shades to be of yellow silk or crinkled paper, rolls tied with yellow ribbon, and menu cards pale yellow with green lettering. Even to town dwellers this table might be produced at a cost of 1s. or 1s. 6d. at the very outside, as quite a large bunch of catkins can be bought, in their season, for 3d. or 4d. Combined with daffodils or mimosa they are ideal, but even alone, as I have just described, they are really charming and very pretty.

SCHEME 48.

Another, or autumn-leaf table, could be carried out still more inexpensively by the aid of beetroot leaves and copper-beech, combined with maiden-hair ferns. The table-cloth should be of pale green art linen, and the table centre of écru lace. Use a large copper bowl as a centre-piece, filled with the copper-beech and beetroot leaves; but as maiden-hair ferns wither so quickly, add the ferns just before the dinner or luncheon, as the case may be, is served. The smaller vases should be filled to match. For sweets, scarlet, green, and brown *amandes bruleés*, in copper bonbon dishes, should be used. Rolls, etc., to be tied with scarlet and pale green ribbons.

SCHEME 49.

Carrot leaves, when they become tinted, are most useful from a decorative point of view, and

quite an ideal table may be arranged with their aid. The table-cloth should be of white hem-stitched linen, and the table centre of white silk gauze. Use the Devonshire pottery vases already described. A quaint, three-handled mug as a centre-piece, and two others—one for the top and one for the bottom of the table slip. Arrange the carrot leaves and white marguerites, or the common wild moon-pennies will do when marguerites are not to be obtained, in the mugs. The sweets to be white and yellow, the menu cards white with yellow lettering, and the rolls, etc., tied with white, yellow-bordered ribbon. Candle shades of either white or yellow, with white or yellow wax candles.

SCHEME 50.

Another pretty autumn table could be carried out with gorse and bramble sprays, combined with single dahlias. In place of a table slip arrange a bed of gorse, carpet-like, in the centre. Stand a copper bowl on this, filled with long sprays and trails of bramble, and single dahlias (yellow). A smaller bowl to be placed at each end, and at each corner of the table flat sprays of the bramble, intermingled with gorse, and tied with broad yellow ribbons. Menu cards of yellow with brown lettering, rolls tied with yellow and brown ribbons, and table glass of Nuremberg. Yellow sweets in copper dishes.

SCHEME 51.

The old-fashioned flower known as "cherry pie" makes a lovely table decoration, especially when combined with purple foxglove. Let the table slip be of deep orange. Use white cut glass or silver baskets to contain the flowers, and combine them with maidenhair ferns and smilax. Long trails of the latter should connect the five baskets—one in the centre, the others at the four corners of the centre-piece—with each other.

Sweets, orange and mauve, in silver dishes. Menu cards orange coloured, with mauve lettering; rolls, etc., tied to match.

SCHEME 52.

The small sunflowers make a lovely table decoration, especially when combined with asparagus fern.

The table-cloth in this instance should be of yellow art linen with a drawn thread border, the table slip of brown velvet, worked with a design of sunflowers. Use the tallest centre-piece you possess to hold the flowers, which will probably require wiring, as they are of the top-heavy variety; and then arrange the latter as lightly as possible, taking care to use plenty of fern. Smaller glasses to correspond should hold from one to two blooms and some ferns, and be dotted here and there

irregularly. The sweets should be yellow nougates and brown-burnt almonds in silver dishes. The table glass, if possible, should be all yellow, and the menu cards yellow with brown lettering, whilst the salt-sticks and rolls must be tied with brown and yellow gauze ribbons. Candles of yellow wax, with yellow silk shades in copper candlesticks.

SCHEME 53.

Scarlet and white gladioli and scarlet geraniums make an admirable table if intermixed with plenty of silver glass and honesty.

A table slip in this case might be dispensed with for a change, and its place taken by a round brass tray of Benares work.

Arrange the gladioli, etc., in a tall vase, also of Benares brass, by way of a centre-piece, and here and there place low bowls of the Benares ware filled with silver grass and honesty and scarlet geraniums. Sweets of scarlet and silver in trays of Benares ware. Rolls tied with silver gauze and scarlet ribbons. Candles of scarlet wax with shades of scarlet silk. Menu cards of scarlet, with silver lettering.

SCHEME 54.

A variation on the above might be made by using only white gladioli combined with the silver

grasses, honesty, and white geraniums. Menu cards of white, with silver lettering. Rolls tied with silver gauze ribbons. White sweets in silver dishes. Candles of white wax in silver candlesticks with white silk shades. Flat bunches of the silver grass and honesty and white geraniums at each of the four corners of the table, tied with the white gauze ribbons in a true lovers' knot bow.

CHAPTER VII.

SCHEMES FOR DINNER PARTIES.

OF floral schemes for these there is practically no end, and you may spend much or little upon them, just as it pleases you. Still, as I have said before, and more than once, many of the very prettiest floral schemes I have seen have also been the least costly to produce.

If, however, “just for once in a way,” you do feel inclined to spend a little more money than usual, and wish to be, shall we say, a trifle extravagant, why there is nothing prettier than—

SCHEME 55.

A Carnation Table.—As to the probable cost thereof, why I should say 6s. worth of blooms and, say, 1s. worth of maidenhair or asparagus fern should prove ample. Select the asparagus in preference to the maidenhair fern, as the latter fades so quickly.

Now for the scheme itself. Let the table-cloth be of white Irish linen with a deep hem-stitched

border. The table slip of plain pink satin, and at each of the four corners a lovers' knot bow of pale pink satin ribbon, whose ends shall reach to each of the four corners of the table.

In the centre stand a bowl of white Coalport china, supported by three Cupids, filled with the carnations and ferns. Tiny vases, eight or ten in number, according to the size of your table, should stand here, there, and everywhere, filled with the pink carnations, etc. In front of each guest place a *boutonnière* of the pink carnations and ferns.

The menu cards must be pale pink with silver lettering, the table glass of pink Bohemian, the sweets palest pink in silver bonbon dishes. In each finger-bowl a pale pink carnation should float, and the guest cards should be of pale pink, with the names written in silver ink.

If possible, the d'oyleys should be of pale pink satin with a bordering of real lace. This latter I know sounds horribly reckless and extravagant, but it is not so in reality, for a couple of yards of pink satin, which will cost you but 1s. 11d. a yard, will fashion at least sixteen or eighteen d'oyleys; and as for the lace, a very fine torchon, which will serve your purpose better than anything else, may be procured, of medium width, for 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. or 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per yard.

Moreover, it is not as if a single usage would wear out your d'oyleys. They may be used again

and again, and if carefully put away, will come out each time looking perfectly fresh, and ought in fact to last indefinitely if only they are taken proper care of. But to go on, the dinner rolls and salt-sticks should be tied with pale pink ribbons to match those on the table centre. The ices should be contained in tiny pink baskets in the shape of a carnation, and ought by rights to be pale pink in colour, in which respect, so far as is possible, the rest of the viands should match them. So much for a pink table.

SCHEME 56.

If you wish for a variation on the above, you might intermix deep red carnations with the pale pink ones, and use red Bohemian table glass in place of the pink, the menu cards being pink with deep red lettering in place of the silver; and the *boutonnieres* of pale pink and deep red carnations intermixed. In either case the candles should be of pale pink wax in silver candlesticks, and have pale pink silk shades. It is worthy of note that the latter is by far the most becoming shade for the complexion, feminine or masculine, it is possible to choose; hence my recommendation. One's guests are invariably at their best when they feel they are looking their best also, and this I believe is equally true of men as of women.

SCHEME 57.

A really lovely dinner-table could be carried out with the deep orange-hued carnations, but these, alas! are so expensive to buy. Still, for the benefit of those readers who may be so fortunate as to possess a garden of their own, I will suggest the following scheme:—

The table slip should be of deep sunset yellow satin, left perfectly plain, but edged with a deep bordering of *écru* lace. At either corner fasten Louis Quinze bows of satin ribbon as described in the foregoing scheme. Use a “squat” Nuremberg bowl for a centre-piece, and eight or ten slender specimen glasses of the same ware, all filled with the orange carnations and silver grasses, a *boutonnière* to match being placed in front of each guest, and a full blown carnation in each finger-bowl. Add to the water in each of these a few drops of orange flower-water. Let the menu cards be of sunset yellow with the lettering in deep orange, the salt-sticks, etc., being tied with ribbons to match. The table glass should be of brown Nuremberg throughout, yellow chartreuse and old cognac being served as the liqueurs. The candles should be of deep yellow wax in black iron scroll-work candelabra, and with orange silk shades. The guest cards of deep yellow with the names written in orange ink. The ices served in tiny

paper baskets of a deep orange colour, and coloured yellow with either saffron or turmeric.

The sweets should be of deep orange in Nuremberg bonbon dishes, and the after-dinner coffee should be served in the deep brown and orange Wedgewood cups now so fashionable.

This is a really lovely table, and if the hostess happens to be a brunette and can wear an orange gown with satisfaction to herself, she will tend to heighten and complete the illusion.

SCHEME 58.

A very beautiful dinner-party scheme might also be carried out with the pale mauve and deep yellow orchid iris when these flowers are in season. The table-cloth should be of pale mauve art linen, the table slip of deep yellow Liberty silk gauze (sunset yellow is the exact shade I mean, and is the name by which they know it at the shop). Ruffle this latter as lightly and artistically as possible, and use your set of Nuremberg to contain the flowers. Orchid iris possess, comparatively speaking, but very little foliage; so to take its place, you must use an abundance of asparagus fern and smilax. The former should be arranged as lightly as possible, and the latter must hang down in long trails to the base of the centre-piece. Too slender specimen glasses must not be chosen, as orchid iris is somewhat like the gladioli tribe,

in that it is rather top heavy and possesses a very thick stalk. The sweeties should be pale mauve and yellow in silver bonbon dishes. The menu cards mauve and yellow alternately, with mauve lettering in the case of yellow cards, and *vice versâ*. The table glass should also be of Nuremberg. The sweets portion of the repast should be of yellow and mauve so far as is possible, and the ices should be pale yellow in baskets of mauve paper. The candles of mauve wax in silver candlesticks, and with sunset yellow silk shades. The guest cards of yellow with the names written in yellow ink, and the salt-sticks and dinner rolls must be tied up with ribbons of the two shades. Care must be taken to arrange the flowers as lightly as possible, and not to overdo them in number, as if clumped together they lose so much of their individual beauty. This is by no means an extravagant table, if we except the cost of the smilax, which is never, at the best of times, very cheap, but it is both a pretty and an uncommon one.

SCHEME 59.

Another lovely little scheme could be carried out really very inexpensively by any one who happens to possess from four to six Dresden china shepherdesses. The table centre should be composed entirely of strips of ribbons, pale green, pale blue, and palest pink in colour, laid evenly

together and fastened (apparently) at each of the four corners by a lovers' knot bow of the three shades. In the centre place a china sedan-chair entirely filled with flowers, pale pink sweet-peas, blue forget-me-nots, and maidenhair fern. Get half-a-dozen tiny wicker baskets—failing these, toy hampers will do—and suspend them from the necks of the shepherdesses by means of bébé ribbons, one in pale pink, another in pale blue, and so on. Fill the baskets or hampers, as the case may be, with the pink sweet-peas, forget-me-nots, and maidenhair fern. Place old-fashioned silver ornaments here, there, and everywhere, such as quaint spoons, snuff-boxes with the lids open, a dessert paper inside filled with sweets. Let the sweetie dishes proper be of silver filled with sweets in the above three colours, the guest cards being of pale pink and pale blue, with the names written in green ink. The menu cards should be of pale blue, with the lettering in pale pink and a deep border of pale green. The ices should be pale green (Pistachio ices are the requisite colour), or Napolitaine—viz., pale green, pale blue, and pale pink, in pink and blue baskets. The salt-sticks and rolls must be tied with ribbons of the same colour, and the candles should be of pale green and pale blue wax in Dresden china candelabra, with pale pink shades. The above is not only a pretty but an exceedingly uncommon scheme, and is sure to be largely admired.

SCHEME 60.

A Chinese table is another scheme I would recommend to those in search of the purely novel, as, if well worked out, it should be beautiful also. The table-cloth should be of the ordinary damask; the table slip a long, narrow strip of Chinese embroidery, if silk fringed why so much the better. The vases should be of Chinese ware. Good ones, if your means will permit, will of course give by far the better effect; but failing these the cheaper sort may be safely indulged in, as after all it is the *tout ensemble* to which your guests will direct their attention, and not the individual cost of any particular ornament. The flowers should as nearly as possible reproduce the colouring of the table slip. For instance, if the latter be of red, mauve, purple, yellow, green, and white, the mauve and purple notes might be reproduced by mauve chrysanthemums and purple asters, the red by single dahlias, the yellow or orange by either chrysanthemums or single dahlias, and the green of course by, say, asparagus or other ferns, and the white note in chrysanthemums, single dahlias, or silver honesty. Or you might stick entirely to single and double dahlias and asters, together with fern, as the latter flowers give every tone your table slip is likely to demand. On paper this violent admixture of colours does not, I know, sound a very happy one, but if skilfully arranged the effect

is really charming in the extreme, as I can testify from personal experience. The table glass should be of white crystal only. The sweets as far as possible should be also of the tones of the table slip and flowers. The candles should be contained in black iron scroll-work candelabra, and have shades of printed Chinese silk or paper. The goodies should be of as many of the above colours as you can procure, in tiny bonbon dishes of Chinese manufacture.

The guest cards should be alternately of the above hues, and the salt-sticks and dinner rolls tied up with strips of Chinese worked or printed ribbon, which may be obtained at Messrs. Liberty's, or indeed at any of the well-known "art shops."

The menus should match the guest cards. Here and there among the flowers the big bronze butterflies of Chinese workmanship should be placed irregularly, and if you possess any small quaint Chinese curios, why so much the better, since you can utilize these also.

A Chinese figure bearing a tray filled with salted almonds might, with advantage, be placed at either end of the table centre in front of host and hostess.

If you possess only the figure, the tray part of the difficulty may be got over as follows:—

Purchase two of the Chinese ash trays, and suspend them by means of a ribbon from the neck of the figure. Then, when you are quite sure that

they are thoroughly stable, add the salted or devilled almonds, but not before, as I know of nothing more disconcerting to a hostess than to have any part of her carefully planned-out arrangements collapse just as the guests are sitting down to, or during the progress of dinner.

Talking of Chinese floral schemes naturally brings one to the subject of those which are Japanese.

SCHEME 61.

Now a really exquisite Japanese table can be carried out during the chrysanthemum season at a very trifling cost, or comparatively so. Chrysanthemums came to us from Japan, so what time more fitting a Japanese table than when these most decorative of all or any flowers are at their perfection?

The table slip, then, should, it goes without saying, be of Japanese workmanship; or, better still, if you possess one, a large plate of Japanese china. The chrysanthemums used should reproduce as far as is possible the colours of either of the above; but a very lovely table could be worked out by using a table slip of blue and white Japanese embroidery, white chrysanthemums in blue and white Japanese china, white silk candle shades fringed with Japanese fringe, goodies of white and a paler blue in tiny blue and white Japanese

china dishes, menu cards with a blue-and-white border, candlesticks of Japanese bronze, and the salt-sticks and rolls tied with Japanese printed ribbon. If the many-hued china is, however, used instead, the colours of the flowers should, as I have already said, match this as closely as is possible. The candle shades should be of the printed Japanese paper sort (these, it is worthy of note, are to be had as cheaply as 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. each), and the candlesticks themselves should be of the before-mentioned bronze. In this latter case the menus and guest cards might be of bronzed stamped paper, with the lettering and names in variegated colours. A big chrysanthemum—the flower only of course—should float in each finger-bowl, and the table glass should be of Nuremberg in two shades of green and brown. If you happen to own any of the tiny Japanese bronze figures, these might be introduced here and there between the flower vases, and any Japanese figures, whether bronze or otherwise, that you may possess could also be turned to good account in the way just described for a Chinese table. The sweeties should be in tiny bronze dishes, and must match the flowers used as closely as possible in colour, etc.

SCHEME 62.

A still prettier idea could be worked out very inexpensively if you happen to be the fortunate

owner of a set (five would be sufficient) of blue crackle vases. The table-cloth in this case should be also of Japanese needlework, in tones of blue and white. Use the largest of your vases by way of a centre-piece, and let it be filled, if in autumn, with white chrysanthemums only; if in the spring, with boughs of almond blossom in pale pink and white. The four smaller vases should also be filled to match, and flat fan-shaped bunches of the almond blossoms should be pinned to each of the four corners of the table-cloth securely, yet invisibly. The sweets should be almond dragées in pale pink and white in the latter case, in white only in the former. The table glass should be of white crystal, and the dinner service should be all white also; unless, which is better still, you own a service in blue-and-white and Japanese china. The candles should be of white wax in Japanese bronze candelabra, and unless you can get shades of either Japanese silk or paper, you had better dispense with the latter altogether. The menu cards should be of white with a Japanese bordering, and the salt-sticks and rolls should be tied with Japanese ribbons, the sweet dishes of course being of the tiny bronze pattern I have just described. This table, though not really expensive (if you possess the necessary china, a very few shillings expenditure will do the rest for flowers and sweets, candles, shades, etc.), is so charming and withal so novel, that readers who may be tired of the round of

fancy centres and ruffled gauzes, etc., etc., will do well to try it. They are sure to be pleased with the effect.

SCHEME 63.

Another uncommon table might be arranged with the aid of horseshoes—cardboard ones of course. Two large horseshoes put back to back should form the table centre. These may be made at home in the following manner:—First cut a pattern from a real horseshoe, then enlarge this, and repeat in cardboard with sides in order to render the shoes capable of holding flowers. Having cut the necessary pieces, these must next be covered with mackintosh in order to render them damp resisting, and the various pieces should then be sewed firmly together in such a manner as to form horseshoes, which are really shallow troughs in which flowers may be arranged. They must next be filled with either wet sand or moss. Six horseshoes will be required—viz., two by way of a centre-piece, and one for each of the four corners of the table. These should then be filled with scarlet roses and fronds of feathery ferns, whilst trails of either honeysuckle or smilax should connect the centre shoes with those at the table corners. By the way, wild dog-roses of the pale pink variety may, if liked, be used in place of the ordinary sort, and if combined with a plenitude of

honeysuckle the effect will be distinctly good. The sweetie dishes should be in the form of silver horse-shoes, also filled with pale pink and green bonbons. The menu cards should be of pale pink in the shape of horseshoes, dotted with imitation nails in silver, and with silver lettering. The dinner rolls, etc., should be tied up with pale pink ribbon, and should be in the shape of horseshoes. Horseshoe moulds should be used when making the creams, etc., and the ices should be of pale pink in horse-shoe-shaped baskets of pink crinkled paper. The candles should be of pale pink wax in silver candlesticks, with pink silk shades.

SCHEME 64.

Yet another pretty variation on this table might be made by using pink carnations or pink climbing geraniums, in place of the scarlet roses or pink dog-roses. When scarlet roses are used, the shades, ices, sweets, ribbons for the dinner rolls, etc., should all match in hue; but in any case the flowers must be so arranged that the waterproof covering the horseshoes is completely hidden, and if this cannot be managed, then the mackintosh must be covered with pale pink satin. The above decoration is also very pretty if carried out entirely in different shades of green, intermixed with honeysuckle. For example, say, two or three kinds of fern, asparagus, maidenhair, etc., might be used with some of the

pretty feathery wild ferns which abound in country lanes and hedges; but this of course is only practicable in the case of country readers. I am afraid for town dwellers honeysuckle is an unobtainable luxury, for of a surety the pitiful stuff sold by the flower-women scarcely dare lay claim to the name.

SCHEME 65.

Another uncommon table might commend itself more by reason of its novelty than, frankly speaking, its prettiness. It was carried out thus:—

The table-cloth was of fine white linen and down; its length on either side ran along four lines of drawn thread-work; beneath these were laid strips of scarlet satin and a long narrow strip of sealing-wax scarlet leather served for a centre-slip. The centre-piece was composed of three of the large scarlet leather string boxes with the lids open, and were filled with white and scarlet geraniums and maidenhair-fern; four smaller boxes similarly filled occupied each of the four corners of the table centre, four others found a place at each corner of the table, and a large one stood in front of the host and hostess. The menu cards were white with scarlet lettering, and were put into the scarlet leather date-frames, the date-card being taken out. Tiny scarlet leather pin-trays served to hold the sweetmeats, which in this instance were

the white American goodies now so popular. The table glass was of scarlet Bohemian throughout. The candles were scarlet wax in the scarlet candlesticks supported by a scarlet-clad elf, which are to be had so cheaply at almost any fancy shop. The ices were tinted scarlet by means of carmine, and were contained in white baskets with the handles tied up with scarlet ribbon. By the way, I have omitted to state that the candle-shades also were scarlet colour, and of accordion-pleated paper, or what looked like it, at any rate. The rolls and salt-sticks were tied up with bows of scarlet ribbon, and in front of each guest was placed a *boutonnière* of scarlet and white geraniums and maidenhair-fern tied up with scarlet ribbons. The hostess wore a scarlet silk gown, and rubies by way of ornaments, and the after-dinner coffee was served in white Coalport cups and saucers on a sealing-wax red tray.

Any one of my readers who may wish to copy the above could do so very cheaply, since the string boxes referred to can be had in the small size for 1s. each, in the large for 2s. 6d. or 2s. each. All that is necessary is to remove the ball of string and the tiny pair of scissors, and to fill the box with wet sand or damp moss. The three large boxes used as a centre-piece should be placed back to back in such a manner that the lids, when propped open, will keep up. The boxes need not be wasted, as, if wiped out carefully and then dried,

they will be quite fit to be used as was originally intended. I would have you note that I am not recommending this scheme personally. I merely describe it as I saw it worked out by a friend of mine, to whom novelty in any shape or form is the most precious thing extant.

SCHEME 66.

Another rather pretty scheme was carried out by the aid of Crown Derby. The centre-piece was a big bowl of Crown Derby filled with blue cornflower and scarlet Shirley poppies. Odd vases and ornaments—there were no two of them alike—were arranged on either side of the centre-piece. Tiny Crown Derby plates held the goodies; and at either of the four corners of the table large bunches of the poppies and cornflowers were placed flatly, tied with broad ribbons in as nearly the tones of the china as possible. The dinner-service throughout was also of the Crown Derby ware, and the finger bowls and table glass were of white cut crystal. The candles were in Crown Derby candlesticks, and were further adorned by crimson shades. The ices were made in the two colours, and the bonbons before referred to were a dull scarlet and a deep blue in hue—though these were, I fancy, made to order, as I have never seen anything quite like them for sale, even at the American goody shops. Of course the objection may be urged against this

scheme that we do not all possess entire dinner-services of Crown Derby, not to say a sufficiency of ornaments to permit of this special decoration being carried out; but really nowadays the imitation china is so beautiful and so exquisitely true in colouring to the original, that one may safely indulge in it without offending any of the canons of good taste. And as regards the purely ornamental portion of the china, this in the modern and imitation ware is really, if anything, even prettier in shape than the old and genuine sort, which, to tell the truth, was often heavy and clumsy in pattern. I hear, too, that there is shortly to be a revival of Crown Derby, in which case even the modern and imitation sort will be likely to go up in price.

SCHEME 67.

Another "china table," to coin a phrase, was carried out in the blue-and-white Wedgewood ware, which was once so fashionable, and of which, if report speaks truly, we are also promised a revival. The centre-slip was of pale lavender-blue satin, with a design of white iris worked thereon, the centre-piece being a Greek-shaped vase of blue-and-white Wedgewood filled entirely with white narcissi and primroses. Smaller vases to match stood at either end of the centre-slip, and were dotted about here and there. The sweets dishes were of silver, filled with white and pale yellow goodies of various

kinds. The table glass was of the time of Queen Anne, and was entirely of white crystal. The candles were of white wax in antique silver candlesticks, and with pale primrose yellow shades, the dinner rolls and salt sticks were tied up with white and yellow ribbons, and the ices were of a pale yellow hue, as nearly as possible that of the primroses. When primroses are out of season, this table might be very successfully carried out by means of pale yellow marguerites and "Star of Bethlehem," or any other white flowers obtainable, but in any case the latter should be arranged as lightly and daintily as possible; the vases themselves are rather severe in outline, and the flowers should be so arranged as to counteract, as far as possible, this effect.

Of quite modern and up-to-date decorative aids there is, so to speak, no end, and among the very prettiest of these are the boat-shaped vessels or baskets made of green unwoven rushes. A large boat, of a size suitable for a centre-piece, can be bought for as low as 2s. 6d. or 3s., whilst the smaller sizes to match cost anything from a shilling upwards.

SCHEME 68.

One very pretty table I recently saw was carried out as follows:—In the centre stood one of the above-mentioned boats of green rush, and this was filled with pink sweet-peas, pink geraniums, white

sweet-peas, and green oaten grasses. At each of the four corners of the table stood a crescent-shaped basket also similarly filled, while two smaller-sized boats flanked the centre-piece. Big posies of the pink-and-white flowers tied up with pink ribbons were placed in front of each guest. The table glass was of white crystal and pale apple-green, the sweets were pale pink and white, and the ices were pink in pale green baskets. I have forgotten to say that the table centre was of white satin worked with a design of pale pink convolvuli and their pale green leaves, the dinner rolls being tied up with pink-and-green gauze ribbons. This was, as a matter of fact, a luncheon-table decoration, but it would be equally pretty and effective by candlelight, especially if the candle shades were of a pale rose pink in hue. I thought the idea of the big posy for each guest to take away with her such a very pretty notion, and one to be, whenever possible, imitated. In the case of the gentlemen, the usual *bouttonnière* was provided.

SCHEME 69.

Another very pretty luncheon-table was carried out entirely in white. The table-cloth was of fine white damask, the table centre of white satin, bordered with a deep edging of modern point. The centre-piece was of white china, filled with white marguerites, white lilies-of-the-valley, and

star of Bethlehem. The specimen glasses were of white crystal in white china holders similarly filled. The menu cards were of white. The ices were white on white china ice-plates. The dinner rolls and salt-sticks were tied with white ribbons, and the sweetmeats were white in white china bonbon dishes. The only touch of colour about the whole affair was the tender green of the lily leaves and the pale gold hearts of the white marguerites, which just relieved the whole from insipidity. Personally, I think our hostess was lucky in that she had broiling weather in her favour—but oh! fancy a white luncheon on a dull, grey, drizzly afternoon! For those, however, who like the above scheme and yet are wishful of introducing just a little colour, I would recommend a table slip of palest yellow satin velvet or gauze. This, while preserving the freshness and daintiness of the scheme, will, so to speak, warm it up a little, and take away from the over-frigid aspect it might otherwise possess. If by candlelight, I would say keep the white scheme, but let your candle shades be crimson.

CHAPTER VIII.

VERY INEXPENSIVE TABLES.

WHERE economy has to be studied with even greater strictness than I have supposed necessary in the foregoing pages, the amateur florist will need to exercise all the wits she possesses; but even so, ugly and bare dinner-tables, destitute of any attempts at decoration, are by no means a *sine quâ non*.

SCHEME 70.

An ocean table, for instance, may be very prettily and cheaply arranged as follows (but in the first instance, you must be prepared to put down at least half-a-crown, which sum, however, may be made, if you choose, to cover your outlay for some months to come):—To begin with, you must purchase five bunches of feathery seaweed. This is obtainable at any good florist's, and in price ranges from 6d. to 9d. a bunch; 6d. is a fair price to pay. The seaweed may be had in two colours—bright green or green-tinted red, and it is wired and mounted in such a manner that when placed

in a vase or specimen glass it will droop over the sides in the most graceful way imaginable. It will last for months, moreover, and has one very great advantage since it does not require water; indeed, I believe, if placed in water it will be spoiled. Provided, as I have already said, with five or six bunches of this (for preference, six), you are armed against flowers for the expensive time of the year, if you so choose.

I append a few of the ways in which the seaweed may be made to carry out various colour schemes.

SCHEME 71.

Table slip of white gauze or pongee silk, lightly ruffled. Vases of white china, one at either corner of the table centre, one as a centre-piece, filled with the seaweed fern. White china candlesticks, with white or pale green shades. Bonbons of white and pale green. Table glass, either all white, or else all Nuremberg.

SCHEME 72.

Table-cloth of dull green art linen. Rustic basket silvered over, filled with the seaweed fern, by way of centre-piece. Big bow of pale pink satin ribbon tied on handle. Two smaller baskets similarly filled and ornamented, one at either end of the table, in front of host and hostess. Pink

and green bonbons in silver bonbon dishes. Candle shades of pale pink silk or paper. If possible, the candlesticks should be of silver; failing these, use the black iron scroll-work candelabra before recommended. Salt-sticks and rolls tied up with pale pink and green ribbons. Menu cards of pale pink with green lettering, or else *vice versâ*.

SCHEME 73.

This is both pretty and uncommon, if you possess the fish shells necessary for its production. Let the table-cloth be of dull green art linen edged with torchon lace. Get a huge scallop or other flat shell and use it as a centre-piece, arranging two bunches of the seaweed in it in such a manner as to let it spread out on the cloth somewhat in a star fashion. The four other bunches of the seaweed should be arranged in green specimen glasses and placed irregularly on the table. In between dot small pink and pearly shells filled with green sweetmeats and salted almonds; failing these, use tiny scallop shells, the very prettiest you can get. Any reader who is the fortunate possessor of any rare, or very pretty foreign shells, might vastly improve upon this scheme for themselves. For instance, the centre-piece might be a huge pinky shell, instead of the flat one before spoken of. Rare shells might hold the sweeties, etc., and

one of those huge flat shells (I fancy they come from Australia, but am not quite sure—perhaps some reader will kindly enlighten me?) could be utilized to hold bread. The candles should be pale green, with silk or crinkled paper shades. The menu cards should, if possible, be in the shape of a scallop shell, and in any case must be of green or pale pink, with lettering in one of these two colours, the rolls, etc., being tied up with green ribbon.

SCHEME 74.

Table-centre of white satin. Specimen vases—*i.e.*, of Nuremberg glass—filled with the seaweed. Sweetie dishes of silver filled with pale green sweets. White candles with white silk or paper shades in silver candlesticks. This latter scheme is enormously improved by mixing white narcissi with the seaweed. A 6d. bunch is ample, for, as a rule, white narcissi are always fairly cheap; indeed, I have known them sold for as little as 2d. a bunch, but I quote 6d. as an outside price.

Yet another pretty scheme:—

SCHEME 75.

This scheme might be achieved by intermixing caladium leaves with the seaweed fern. In this instance let the table slip be of pale pink satin or

pink silk gauze ; a pongee could be used with almost equally good effect, and is much cheaper—in a shade matching as nearly as possible the pinky streaks in the caladium leaves. The centre-piece should be one of the silvered baskets whereof I have several times discoursed. Tie a big bow of pale pink satin ribbon on the handle. Fill and ornament from two to four baskets in a similar manner and place them here and there irregularly. Let the sweets be pale pink in silver bonbon dishes, the menu cards pink, and the rolls, etc., tied up with pale pink satin ribbon. If you possess any Indian silver compote stands and vases, these latter might be used with admirable effect to hold the feathery sea-fern. In this case try a centre-slip of pale green gauze, and let the sweets, menu cards, etc., be all of pale green. If candles are used, the shades should be of scarlet silk, as this casts such a pretty and becoming reflection.

SCHEME 76.

This scheme, wherein the seaweed plays a prominent part, could be worked out by intermixing it with a great bunch of the silver honesty I have elsewhere mentioned. Use a copper or china bowl by way of centre-piece, and arrange two bunches of the seaweed in it in such a manner that it falls well over the sides, and fill the centre

with the honesty, intermixed with the seaweed-fern. Smaller bowls or specimen glasses filled in the same way should be placed cornerwise to the bowl. The table glass should be of white, with bright apple-green hock glasses. The sweets white dragées and pale green fondants, and the menu cards of green with silver lettering. If candles are used, the shades should be either white or, what is even prettier, bright scarlet, as the latter gives such a lovely glow to the silvery honesty. The red-tinted seaweed, of which I have spoken also, combines excellently with honesty. In this latter case let the table slip be of white satin, pongee silk, or gauze. The specimen vases of either white china or Nuremberg glass, or green Belgian pottery. Sweets, white dragées and scarlet *amande brûlées*. Candles in white china candlesticks, if the white china vases are used; if not, then either silver or else black iron scroll-work. Shades of scarlet silk, and menu cards of scarlet or green, with silver lettering. This is as pretty and inexpensive a table for a cold winter's night as it is possible to conceive.

SCHEME 77.

This pretty and inexpensive scheme could be worked out like this: Place long trails of the tiny variety of variegated ivy down the table-cloth. At

either of the four corners place flat fan-shaped bunches of the ivy and silver honesty tied up with cerise ribbons. The centre-piece should be a white china bowl, supported by Cupids filled with the seaweed-fern, silver honesty, and trails of ivy. Other vases similarly filled should stand in front of host and hostess, and be dotted about here and there. And just above the top of the plates of host and hostess, the trails of ivy should be caught together with a lovers'-knot bow of cerise ribbons. Candles without shades, in black iron scroll-work candelabra. If you particularly desire shades, they should be white, as up to now I have seen no cerise ones on the market, and red and cerise do not accord amiably. The sweets too, must be either white or green in hue, and the menu cards green, with silver lettering. By-the-way, if liked, the sweets could be the chocolate almonds which are sold, I believe, coated with silver and cerise paper. They only cost 1s. 6d. a pound, so they are by no means an expensive luxury, as four ounces are ample for, say, four or six people. The table glass should be of white crystal and Nuremberg green. Possibly scarlet Bohemian glass could be used, but I question if it would not clash with the cerise ribbons aforesaid. This scheme is more suitable for a country dinner-table than for a town one, as ivy, which can be had for asking in the country, is by no means cheap to buy in town.

SCHEME 78.

But we have not exhausted the possibilities of that seaweed yet. Combined with violets it possesses a fresh attraction. Use one of the green Belgian pottery squat-shaped, pinched-in three-cornered bowls. Arrange two bunches of the seaweed in this, and fill the centre with three penny bunches of violets, the table slip being of pale green Liberty velveteen. At each of the four corners a green Belgian pottery vase filled with the seaweed and a bunch of violets. Sweet dishes of the green pottery filled with crystallized violets. Menu cards of green, with mauve lettering. Candle shades of either pale green or scarlet. Table glass of Nuremberg green, and if scarlet shades are chosen, of scarlet Bohemian ware. The objection may perhaps be urged that the introduction of scarlet for candle shades is hardly a happy suggestion, and that, there being no other touch of scarlet in this scheme, it would be rather sudden. Scarlet shades, however, with very few exceptions are always permissible, and the scarlet here, if used, could be carried out in the table glass, and would thus tend to warm things up generally.

SCHEME 79.

Just one more scheme in which our seaweed may figure. The table-cloth should be of art green

linen, in a shade as nearly akin to sea-green as you can procure. In the centre place a large bread boat silvered over, and filled with the seaweed-fern, smaller boats similarly filled being placed at the four sides of the centre-piece; white crystal specimen glasses, filled with seaweed and either narcissi or tulips, should be dotted in between and placed here and there on the table. (Note.—If the flowers are considered too costly, or are unobtainable, substitute the silver honesty or trails of variegated ivy—the small, not the large, variety.) Use tiny pinky shells to hold your sweets, which must be green in colour; failing the shells, silver dishes or those of green Nuremberg ware may be used instead, but the shells carry out the scheme to greater perfection. The menu cards should be of green with silver lettering, and the candle shades of either pale green or my favourite scarlet. The dinner rolls and salt-sticks being tied with green ribbons, intermixed, if scarlet shades are used, with scarlet ribbons. The above is both a pretty and an uncommon scheme. And moreover it is extremely inexpensive, as the bread boats before referred to are obtainable for 6d. or 8d. each at any fancy shop. They can be easily silvered over by using Ardenbrite, a preparation sold by every oilman of good standing. A variation on the above might be made by intermixing ivy leaf geranium with the seaweed, if you possess the former. The pale pink blossom and pretty

green-and-white leaves accord admirably with the feathery sea-fern, and are an immense improvement, florally speaking, to it. In this case, menu cards, sweets, and candle shades should all be chosen of a pink as nearly akin as possible to that of the geranium.

SCHEME 80.

Another charming scheme, possible at a very small cost to any one who possesses climbing geraniums of the pink variety, would be a watteau table. Let the table-cloth be of white linen, not damask, as the latter is so much heavier. Down the two sides of the table, but sufficiently away from the diners' plates, should run two strands of broadish pale pink and pale blue ribbon. At either end of the table, just in front of host and hostess, a large true-lovers' knot bow of pale pink and pale blue ribbons intermixed should be securely, but invisibly, pinned to the table-cloth. A tall Louis Quinze basket, either of basketwork silvered over, or else of old or modern Leeds, should be filled entirely with the pink climbing geranium and forget-me-nots. Smaller baskets similarly filled should be arranged wherever there is space for them, and, if possible, the candlesticks should be of the "China Shepherdess" pattern, with pale blue candles and pale pink shades; the sweets should be pale pink and pale blue fondants;

the dinner rolls and salt-sticks tied up with pale pink and blue ribbons in true-lovers' knots bows; the table glass should be of white crystal, and the finger-bowls should have a spray of geranium and forget-me-not floating in each. If you possess any Dresden china figures holding baskets, these might with advantage be dotted here and there, the baskets aforesaid being filled with the pink and blue flowers. A 9d. or 1s. bunch of forget-me-nots should be ample for this table, with, say, a bunch of the same size of ivy geranium; so you see this too may be considered a very inexpensive scheme. A judicious intermixture of maidenhair-fern would be a great improvement, if you are fortunate enough to possess the latter without having to buy it; otherwise it may be dispensed with.

CHAPTER IX.

TABLES FOR CHILDREN'S PARTIES.

It is no use going in for high art where the little ones are concerned. In my estimation, something simple and pretty; or better still, something funny is infinitely preferable.

SCHEME 81.

At a Christmas party, for instance, a big bowl filled with scarlet tulips, white chrysanthemums, and white narcissus, intermingled with mistletoe, as a centre-piece, with tall, slender vases either of green Nuremberg or white china; the table slip being of white satin, white silk gauze, or white pongee silk. The candles to be scarlet wax, in silver candlesticks, with scarlet shades; the sweet dishes silver, filled with scarlet goodies, chocolate almonds, and white dragées; the menu cards of scarlet with white lettering, and the rolls tied with scarlet bébé ribbons; the crackers being of bright scarlet gelatine. This should prove a pretty enough table to satisfy even the most modern child, though in this connection I fancy the modern child has not advanced more than his father had, and cares more



No. 4.—SPRING TABLE. See page 150.

for what is on the table than for aught in the way of floral decorations.

SCHEME 82.

A funny variation on the above might be provided by substituting a large figure of Father Christmas, with a big basket in front and one on his back, filled entirely with scarlet tulips, white chrysanthemums, redberries, holly, and mistletoe. The vases before-mentioned being filled, of course, to match, and sweets, ribbons, crackers, and candle shades being all of scarlet. This is for a sit-down tea or supper. Where a stand-up supper is the order of the day, the vases, etc., should be placed in a straight line down the centre of the table, as this allows quite twice the room for the various viands and plates. As regards the actual decoration of the rooms themselves, I think nothing can equal plenty of holly, ivy, evergreens, and mistletoe, together with a liberal allowance of Japanese lanterns, the latter being also used to decorate the hall and staircase, and care should be taken to have them properly and straightly hung, that each is provided with a little tin or glass case to hold the night lights or candles, whichever are used; also that they are hung high up and well out of the reach of eager little hands, etc., as this plan does away with the danger of fire. When the presents are to be distributed, the following will be

found as good and as amusing a way as any. Two big baskets should be draped with Turkey red, and one placed on either side of the room; one containing the presents for the boys, and the other those for the girls. A grown-up person should preside over each basket, and then the children may march in, in two long lines, each child being blindfolded. They should then be allowed to dip their hands into the baskets, in turn, and choose one, or two articles, according to the number of presents given. Of course, if the presiding genii see that the girl or boy in question is selecting something unsuitable to her or his years, they can quietly slip some more appropriate toy under the hesitating little fingers. I think you will find that the above plan is, as a rule, highly amusing, and that, moreover, each child is satisfied and the presents very quickly distributed, which, any one who knows much about children will tell you, is rarely the case when the little ones are allowed to choose for themselves. So much for children's Christmas festivities. A Twelfth-night party, I may add, should always have a couple of figures, king and queen, on the supper table as an aid to the floral decorations.

SCHEME 83.

A couple of large dolls, capable of standing firmly, should be selected, and dressed in ap-

propriate royal garments, the king wearing a mantle of scarlet velveteen, edged with gold trimming, etc., and the queen a similar mantle of royal blue velvet. A couple of fairly large toy hampers, filled with flowers, should be suspended by means of scarlet ribbons round their necks, while smaller dolls, some dressed as royal pages, some as ladies-in-waiting, might bear baskets filled in a like manner, and be dotted here and there. The dolls need not be wasted, as if you are not desirous of keeping them for a future occasion, they can be raffled after supper. There is nothing the average small child loves so much as a raffle. The element of chance in it seems to appeal to him, as it does to children of a larger growth. The Twelfth-night cake, of course, must not be forgotten, nor the gold and silver rings, the thimbles, and threepenny-bits, which should find a place therein.

SCHEME 84.

Where the festivity in question is a birthday party—if in summer or spring—the name of the hero or heroine of the hour should be written in flowers on the table-cloth in lieu of a centre slip. Then the centre-piece might consist of a large Belgian pottery bowl, filled with the same flowers, while smaller vases of the green Belgian ware can be dotted here and there, and also filled in a like manner. If possible, the icing of the cake should

match the flowers in hue, and the sweets and crackers, if the latter are used, should also match as near as possible. In the case of a party in honour of a little girl who bears the name of a flower, the name-flowers should figure as prominently as possible in the decorations.

SCHEME 85.

For instance, a "Marguerite" scheme would be pretty as follows. A table-cloth of yellow art linen, with the name "Marguerite" written round the centre-piece with the white daisies known by that name; the centre-piece being of white china, filled with the flowers; and smaller vases, filled to match, being arranged wherever there is space for them. The cakes should be iced white and yellow, and blanc-manges and jellies white or golden in hue. The sweets should be yellow, in white china dishes, and if the room boasts a mirror, "Marguerite" might be written across it in the yellow blooms. This is very easily managed even by the amateur florist, although I am bound to admit that it does get the mirror rather into a mess! Cut the letters out of white cardboard to the requisite size,—you can, I believe, buy them ready done, if the cutting-out process is thought too troublesome—gum them very lightly to the mirror, then brush them over with gum, and cover lightly yet thickly with the flowers. There is a gum called "stickphast," just the

thing for the purpose. When the mirror has to be restored to its ordinary use, the flowers and letters that cannot be got away can easily be loosened by means of a cloth dipped in very hot water, and applied again and again until the fragments can be readily wiped off.

SCHEME 86.

A variation on this might be made by using yellow marguerites in place of white ones, in which case the table-cloth should be white, and the centre slip, if one is used, either white or yellow satin or silken gauze.

SCHEME 87.

Another pretty name table might be carried out with violets, the cloth being of pale green, with a mauve centre slip; or of pale mauve, with green Liberty velvet slip. The name, "Violet," should be written in a slanting direction at either end of the table, and the flowers should be violets, the ordinary English variety intermingled with Parma violets and a little maidenhair-fern. To contain these use either the Nuremberg glasses or the green Belgian pottery vases, of which I have sung the praises so loudly more than once.

SCHEME 88.

A "rose" table is very easily carried out. One in yellow roses would be lovely worked out thus.

A table-cloth of either ordinary white damask or yellow art linen—the latter for preference—silver bowl or basket in the middle filled with yellow roses and maidenhair-fern, silver vases and specimen glasses similarly filled should be placed here and there and everywhere, wherever room can be found for them. Quaint bits of silver and old silver spoons of odd shapes should also be arranged in between; and if this festivity is a supper party, the candles should be yellow wax, in silver candlesticks.

SCHEME 89.

A “lily” table could be charmingly carried out on similar lines, but all these latter schemes are really more suitable for nearly grown-up girls, as I am afraid very little people would hardly appreciate them.

CHAPTER X.

CHRISTMAS DECORATIVE SCHEMES.

SCHEME 1.

Table centre of white satin. Edges of same, bordered with a conventional design in gold thread appliqué. Table vases of Benares ware. Four squat vases for either corner of the table centre. A high slender one as a centre-piece, filled with scarlet tulips, white narcissi, and variegated holly—choose that with plenty of berries. Table glass to be of green Nuremberg, or else—and this is preferable—of scarlet Bohemian glass. The bonbon dishes should be the flat trays of the Benares ware, filled with scarlet *amandes brulées* and chocolates. The dinner rolls should be tied up with scarlet bébé ribbon, and the cheese straws or salt-sticks similarly tied.

SCHEME 2.

Centre slip of faded mauve velvet or Liberty gauze artistically ruffled. Nuremberg specimen

glasses filled with scarlet tulips and pale mauve chrysanthemums, and, if obtainable, asparagus fern. Silver bonbon dishes filled with pale mauve nougatines and scarlet-burnt almonds. Dinner rolls tied up with scarlet and mauve bébé ribbon. Mauve or scarlet wax candles in silver candlesticks. Table glass of Nuremberg green, or scarlet Bohemian glass. Candle shades of scarlet silk or scarlet paper. Menu cards of pale mauve with scarlet lettering.

SCHEME 3.

Centre slip of white satin embroidered in a Louis Quinze design of true-lovers' knots, and roses in scarlet velvet bébé ribbon. Rustic basket (silvered over) in centre filled with scarlet tulips and lilies-of-the-valley. Four similar but much smaller baskets at each of the four corners of the table centre, and one at each end of the table in front of host and hostess respectively. Scarlet sweets in silver bonbon dishes. Dinner rolls tied up with scarlet velvet ribbons. Pure white table glass. Scarlet candles in silver candlesticks. Candle shades of white silk, or the candles might be the ordinary white ones, and the shades of scarlet silk. Menu cards of silver with scarlet lettering. Note that the preparation for silvering the rustic basket can be bought at any oil shop or at any of the stores.

SCHEME 4.

Table slip of pale green Liberty velvet. Vases of white Coalport china, filled with lilies-of-the-valley and scarlet poinsettias. White Coalport china bonbon dishes filled with scarlet nougatines and the tiny green pea sweets which are filled with chartreuse. (Note.—Both these latter only cost 2s. a pound, and four ounces of each should prove ample.) Table glass of white crystal and hock glasses of pale green. Dinner rolls and salt-sticks to be tied up with green scarlet ribbons. Candles of scarlet wax in white Coalport china candlesticks, with candle shades of pale green silk. Menu cards of white Early English paper, with scarlet borders and pale green lettering. A *bouttonnière* of lilies-of-the-valley and scarlet poinsettias to be placed in front of each guest. The Coalport vases above referred to are very inexpensive, and a whole set may be bought for as low as 10s. 6d. or 12s. 6d. Of course this is but the modern sort, and the other is, I believe, both scarce and dear.

SCHEME 5.

Centre slip of ruffled Liberty silk gauze. Copper bowl in middle filled entirely with scarlet tulips and slender sprays of mistletoe. Four tiny bowls at either corner similarly filled, connected with scarlet velvet ribbon tied into true-lovers' knots

and with long ends. Copper sweetie dishes filled with scarlet and brown-burnt almonds. Copper candlesticks. Candles of scarlet wax with scarlet shades. Rolls and salt-sticks tied with scarlet ribbon.

SCHEME 6.

Supper Table.—Table slip of white silk gauze bordered with holly and ivy. Centre-piece of *gris de Flandres* filled with scarlet flowers. Silver honesty and long trails of variegated ivy. Dwarf mugs of the *gris de Flandres* at either end of the centre-piece similarly filled. Two smaller jugs of the same ware in front of host and hostess, also filled in the same manner. Scarlet and white dragées in silver sweet dishes. Menu cards of white with scarlet borders and grey lettering. White wax candles in black iron scroll-work candelabra.

SCHEME 7.

FOR A CHRISTMAS PARTY.

Centre slip of modern point over pale green satin. This should reach from one end of the table to the other. Tall centre vase of Nuremberg glass filled with scarlet tulips, lilies-of-the-valley, and scarlet anemones. Glasses similarly filled on either side will be required. Flat fan-shaped

bunches of the same flowers pinned securely to table-cloth and to front of table-cloth. Candelabra of black iron scroll-work filled with scarlet wax candles *without* shades, as these are liable to be knocked off easily. Menu cards of pale green with scarlet bordering and lettering. Table glass, if possible, entirely of pale green and scarlet Bohemian ware. Bonbons of scarlet and pale green. Crackers in scarlet gelatine paper, and all sweets wherever possible to be scarlet, white, or pale green in hue. (Note.—This is easily managed, as cochineal supplies one, and spinach greening—which is easily made at home—the other.) The white dishes, such as blanc-mange, cream of chicken, etc., being left untouched. The picture-frames, etc., should be completely hidden by holly and mistletoe, and a bough of the latter should be suspended either from the ceiling or over the door by means of a huge true-lovers' knot of scarlet and pale green ribbon. This scheme might be worked out a little differently by substituting other flowers of the same hue for those herein indicated, and scarlet or white satin might form the foundation for the lace slip, if the pale green is not liked. In this case, though, the sweets of course should be only white and scarlet. As regards Christmas mottoes, etc., which find so much favour in many people's eyes, I am of the opinion that these are better bought ready-made—*i.e.* ready for the fresh holly, mistletoe, etc. But

where it is desired to make them at home, they should first be cut out of stiff cardboard, then painted over with gum in order to stick the cotton-wool, and finally outlined with either holly, ivy, or mistletoe, as fancy may dictate. It is worthy of note in this connection that the artificial holly and ivy give by far the best results to amateurs at this kind of decorative work.

CHAPTER XI.

SUPPER PARTIES.

FOR a “king’s birthday dinner” or supper party the following

SCHEME I.

answers admirably. Table slip of white satin or white gauze, or a silken Union Jack or royal standard. Centre-piece of white china, a huge boat supported by a figure of Britannia, would be both pretty, and if you do not already possess one, very inexpensive to buy. This should be filled with scarlet and white geraniums and blue cornflowers, intermixed with Star of Bethlehem—the white, not the pink, variety. Smaller vases filled in the same manner, or white china baskets, should be placed, one at each of the four corners of the table slip, and one each in front of host and hostess respectively. The candles should be of white wax in white china candlesticks or candelabra, with scarlet silk shades. The sweets should be of three colours, red, white, and blue, and contained in white china dishes. A *boutonnière* of

cornflowers and white and scarlet geraniums should be placed in front of each guest. The menu cards should be of white, bordered with blue, and with scarlet lettering, and in each finger-bowl a spray of scarlet geranium and blue cornflowers should float. The table glass should be of white crystal and scarlet Bohemian, and the rolls, etc., must be tied up with ribbons in the three colours. A variation on the above might be made by using a Union Jack by way of centre slip, while the menu cards might be of white with the Union Jack painted in the left-hand corner.

The following schemes would all answer admirably for a stand-up supper-party. Where a sit-down supper is given, any scheme suggested for a dinner-table could be used; and where tiny separate tables are employed, as a rule the decorations are fairly simple.

SCHEME 2.

Perhaps in the latter case, the very best, though by no means the most original, scheme, is the satin sack one—viz., satin sacks of a certain colour harmonizing with the flowers, or in a happy contrast, filled with vessels containing water, the latter of course holding the flowers. One of the prettiest tables I ever saw was evolved by means of eleven old jam-pots—ten small ones, and one very large one for the centre-piece—and three or four yards of pink

satin at 1s. 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. a yard. Square bags, with a frill and a draw-string of pink baby ribbon, were made for all these. Then the jars were placed in them and partly filled with water, the bags were drawn semi-tight round the necks, without in any way defining the pattern of the jars, and were filled with pink carnations and pink poppies. The effect was admirable. Care should be taken when copying this scheme to make the bags sufficiently full, in order that the table decoration may look just like so many bags filled with flowers. In the above case the table glass was entirely of pink Bohemian ware; the menu cards pale pink with silver lettering; the candles pink wax with pink silk shades, in silver candelabra; the sweets and ices pale pink, and the rolls tied up with pale pink ribbons. Of course any colour fancied may be chosen. By the way, a seven-pound size jam-pot will be required for the afore-said centre-piece, and ten one-pound size pots—viz., one for each of the four corners of the centre slip, one for each of the four corners of the table, and one each in front of host and hostess respectively.

Here are the schemes above referred to:—

SCHEME 3.

A floral cushion made entirely of daffodils for a centre-piece, smaller cushions at each of the four corners of the table; tall, slender white crystal

specimen glasses filled with daffodils and their leaves, to be placed wherever there is room for them. Menu cards of yellow, with green lettering. Table glass of white crystal. Yellow wax candles in silver candelabra with yellow silk shades. Yellow sweets in silver dishes.

SCHEME 4.

A big jug of Toby ware filled with scarlet poppies, blue cornflowers, and green wheat and oat grasses. Four smaller jugs, one at either of the four corners of the table, and two large rustic baskets filled in the same manner at either end. Menus written on brown paper. Sweets: every variety of chocolate intermixed with scarlet nougates. Scarlet silk shades to the candles, which should be of scarlet wax, in black iron scroll-work candelabra.

SCHEME 5.

Slip of modern point running from one end of the table to the other, centre-piece in the shape of a dolphin, filled with rose-coloured phlox and asparagus-fern. Small boats placed sideways at each of the four corners of the table, filled in a similar manner. Tall fish-shaped vases, also filled with the phlox and ferns, to be placed wherever

room can be found for them. Rose-coloured wax candles and shades, rose-coloured sweets in silver dishes; rose-coloured menus with silver lettering. All dishes to be tinted rose-colour so far as is possible. Table glasses of pink Bohemian ware. Ices tinted pale rose-colour.

This would be a pretty scheme for a supper given in honour of a sailor son who is just entering his profession.

SCHEME 6.

Table-cloth of white linen down which must run long lines of green satin ribbon, finishing at either end of the table in true-lovers' knots. Centre-piece of green Nuremberg glass on a black iron scroll-work stand, filled with white giant chrysanthemums, asparagus-fern, and long trails of smilax. Specimen glasses of Nuremberg ware filled in a similar manner. Table glass of pale green and white crystal. Ices tinted a pale green. Menu cards of white, pale green lettering. Sweets pale green fondants and white dragées. White wax candles in black iron scroll-work candelabra.

Note.—The candle shades may be of either green or white silk, but personally I should prefer scarlet silk, as the lovely rosy shade cast by this hue warms up the white decorations and is eminently pretty.

SCHEME 7.

Pale mauve table-cloth of art linen. Centre-piece a huge rustic basket silvered over, and with a big scarlet satin ribbon-bow tied on the handle, filled with scarlet poinsettias and pale mauve violets. Smaller baskets filled and decorated in the same manner to be placed one at either end of the table, and others wherever room can be found for them. Sweets, scarlet and mauve; ices, pale mauve. Table glass, scarlet Bohemian; menus, mauve with scarlet lettering. Mauve wax candles in silver candlesticks or candelabra. Shades of scarlet silk.

SCHEME 8.

Pale green art-linen table-cloth, very tall centre-piece filled with flame-coloured tulips, silver honesty, asparagus-fern, and long trails of smilax. Dwarf glasses filled in a like manner, and graduating in size, to be placed down the centre of the table from end to end. Pale green sweets in silver dishes, menu cards of pale green with flame-coloured lettering. Candles in silver candlesticks without shades. Quaintly shaped bits of silver and old spoons of the same metal to be placed here and there as fancy may dictate. Ices tinted a pale green, and all dishes as nearly as possible to be of the same hue. If a table slip is particularly

desired, it should be of Liberty silk gauze in a shade as nearly akin to the tulips as it is possible to get. This scheme is equally pretty by day or lamplight, but care must be taken to select a table-cloth of just the right shade of pale green, or the result may be disastrous. This scheme, too, could be carried out by means of a satin sheeting table-cloth, but this would add very considerably to the expense, and I am not at all sure that it would improve the appearance of the table ; still, as satin sheeting is sometimes used for this purpose, I give you the hint for what it is worth.

SCHEME 9.

Table centre of white satin outlined with a key pattern in white and gold tinsel thread. Centre-piece consisting of a tall, green Belgian pottery jar filled with white clover, star of Bethlehem, and white marguerites. Smaller vases of the same ware filled in a similar manner. Sweets, white and pale green, in green pottery dishes. Ices pale green. White shades to candles, etc. This is essentially a "country" table, for I do not know where dwellers in towns could get their white clover from; but it is nevertheless exceedingly pretty.

SCHEME 10.

Scarlet art-linen table-cloth. Centre-piece of copper filled with gold and brown beech leaves

and white and scarlet single dahlias. Smaller copper bowls filled to match, intermixed with tall specimen glasses containing single dahlias and maidenhair-fern. Sweets of white and scarlet in tiny copper trays. Scarlet candle shades. Scarlet ices, and, if possible, jellies, etc.

SCHEME 11.

Table-cloth of white Irish linen with hem-stitched border. Centre slip of flame-coloured velvet. Centre-piece in shape of a large crystal boat filled with flame-coloured tulips. Japanese metal fish, filled to correspond, placed here and there. (Note —Silver honesty should be intermixed with the tulips; failing this, use fern.) Crick lights arranged in brass or Japanese metal or bronze candlesticks. Sweets in silver-paper cases, in silver bonbon dishes. Baskets of Japanese metal-work at the four ends of the table, filled with flame-coloured tulips and either honesty or fern. Big bows of flame-coloured satin ribbon tied on handles of same. Menu cards of flame-colour, with silver lettering.

CHAPTER XII.

SILVER WEDDING SCHEME.

FOR a silver wedding party the following scheme will be found both suitable and inexpensive:—The rooms should be decorated with great bunches of silver honesty, used in conjunction with either white narcissi, white jonquils, and white heather—if it is wished to keep the decorations to white—or white lilac or roses, etc. But scarlet geraniums, or poppies, or pink carnations, and pink roses will also be found suitable, and not unduly expensive. For the dinner or supper table, as the case may be, the following would be appropriate:—Table centre of silver gauze. Centre-piece a bowl of silver, supported by cupids—or, failing this, a bowl of white china supported by cupids—filled with feathery fern, silver honesty, and pink carnations, poppies, and geraniums intermixed. Silver (or white) specimen glasses filled to match, and in front of host and hostess smaller bowls similar to the centre-piece, filled in the same manner. The sweets should be pale pink and silver, in silver *bonbonnières*; the menu cards of

pale pink with silver lettering, and the dates of the marriage at the top. Salt-sticks tied with silver and pink ribbon, and the rolls tied similarly. White or pale pink wax candles in silver candelabra, with pale pink silk shades. (The ever-pretty inverted-flower shapes, such as a rose or a poppy design, are by far the prettiest; or the crick-light fittings fitted to an ordinary candlestick or candlesticks are charming and very inexpensive. Indeed, to my mind the "Crick Lites" are to be recommended in preference to any ordinary candles, as not only do they give a far better light, but they are absolutely safe, and there is no danger of the shades catching fire, owing to the presence of the protecting glass-shade. The price, by the way, of these lights is exceedingly moderate—one shilling per box, and each light burns for five hours; whilst the glasses cost but ninepence each, and the prettiest imaginable shades are to be had from sixpence each and upwards.) Yellow or scarlet may be substituted for the pink flowers, if fancied. In this case, of course all the rest of the accessories must match.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE QUESTION OF COST.

IN fancy I can hear the reader muttering discontentedly, "It's all very well to give us these cheap flower schemes, but what about all the accessories—the different sets of coloured glass, the table centres, the menu cards which must all match, the yards and yards of ribbon of divers hues wherewith to tie up those dinner rolls, the sweeties to correspond, and, last but by no means least, the sets of Belgian pottery ware, white china, Benares bowls, copper bowls, Nuremberg glass? It is these things which are expensive, not the flowers."

But these things do not cost in the ratio imagined by the guileless reader. Let me explain. We will begin with the table glass. A set of this in Nuremberg need cost but little if we go the right way to work. *Imprimis*, then, a dozen hock glasses of the quaintest and most delightful shapes imaginable cost but 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. each; 6s. 9d for the dozen. Claret tumblers are the same price, and champagne glasses 1s. each. The tiny sweetie

dishes often referred to are $6\frac{3}{4}$ d. each; the finger-bowls $8\frac{3}{4}$ d. each, 8s. 9d. a dozen; and the tall centre-piece will cost you only 2s. 9d., while four tall specimen glasses to match are to be had for $9\frac{1}{2}$ d. each. So that at the very outside the entire set will only come to some £2 odd, which includes the champagne glasses and finger-bowls. Now, you might dispense with the latter for every-day use, in which case you would be 12s. to the good; or you might buy a half-set, which, roughly speaking, would only cost just over a pound. Then as to the Bohemian glass, an entire set of this is not necessary, but a dozen claret tumblers and a dozen finger-bowls you should own. The finger-bowls will cost you 12s. 6d. the dozen, and the claret tumblers about 10s. 9d.; of these, too, you could manage with half a set, supposing you limit your parties to six. As to the white crystal glass, this we need not discuss since you doubtless already possess it. A set of the white china (centre-piece and vases) so often referred to may be had for less than half-a-guinea—thus, centre-piece 2s. 6d., four corner vases 4s., two end vases 2s. The green Belgian pottery ware may be had at about the same rates; the copper bowls, though they sound so imposing, cost only 2s. 11d. for the large size, and 1s. $0\frac{1}{2}$ d. for the small size. The Benares ware is a little dearer—3s. 6d. each for the bowls, and 1s. 6d. each for the quaint little vases (a smaller size can be had for a 1s. each). The rustic

baskets may be had from 9d. upwards, and this is practically nothing compared with the cost of silver ones; while the bread boats, as I have already said, are only about 8d. each. As to the menu cards, a hundred of these in assorted shades may be bought for 2s. 6d. or 2s. 9d. the hundred. The colours I always invest in are yellow, scarlet, mauve, white, and pale blue. The lettering in a contrasting colour may be done by oneself by means of an ordinary pen and ink, using coloured ink in place of the black variety. The sweets of various hues may be bought from 1s. a pound and upwards, and really when one considers how few people take sweets in these highly hygienic days, a pound will go a long way. As to the question of table slips—why, that is easily answered; as two or three strips of Liberty velveteen and a like number of lengths of Liberty silk gauze will last for an indefinite time, if properly taken care of, and will form the basis for colour schemes innumerable. In sale-time either of the above are to be had in odd lengths for veritably a few pence. The ribbon for the rolls, I know, sounds extravagance, but it is not so in reality; since a dozen yards of baby ribbon of excellent quality may be bought for $4\frac{3}{4}$ d., whilst that in a wider width costs but $6\frac{3}{4}$ d. Now, if the pieces are carefully collected after dinner, smoothed out, and folded neatly, they too will last for an indefinite time. The colours in which I should advise you to invest,

both as regards table slips and ribbons, are pale art green, scarlet, mauve, sunset yellow, and white, and with these and a set of the above-mentioned table glass and specimen vases, etc., not the most moderately pursed hostess need ever lack a dainty dinner-table.

CHAPTER XIV.

FLORAL SCHEME FOR A CHRISTENING PARTY.

FOR a christening party it is usual to keep all the floral decorations to white, but a happy touch of colour may be introduced in the shape of a table centre of pale blue or pale pink, according to whether the little new-comer is a boy or a girl.

The following scheme is both pretty and suitable:—Table centre of pale blue (or pink) silk gauze, ruffled lightly; a silver bowl or a white china basket filled with white lilac and narcissi, or white sweet-peas and tea-roses, or star of Bethlehem and tea-roses, pale pink roses, etc., according to the season. A very pretty device would be to make the centre-piece a cradle of flowers; one of the small basket cradles should answer the purpose admirably. The specimen vases of either silver or white china should match the centre-piece and be similarly filled. The *bonbonnières* must be of silver, filled with white dragées—the “christening sweet,” as it is called abroad—and the menu cards should bear the date of the baby’s birth and his or her name. The rolls, etc., must be tied up with bête

ribbon to match the hue of the centre slip. The foregoing is for a luncheon or dinner. If a tea-party is given to celebrate the interesting event, and a buffet-table is used, the front of the table might be further adorned by sprays of flowers tied with strands of ribbon of either blue or pink, and securely pinned in place. If candle-shades are used, these, if not pink, should be white, as blue is by no means a becoming shade. At christening parties the cake, with its device of a cradle and Cupids, should occupy the place of honour on the table in front of the happy hostess and mother.

CHAPTER XV.

SEASON SCHEMES

(*See Illustrations*).

NO. 1.—WINTER TABLE.

Scarlet chiffon slip centre-piece, and vases of Benares ware filled with scarlet tulips, scarlet ranunculas, and lilac (sprouting) leaves. Candelabra of black iron. Glass ware of scarlet Bohemian glass, and white crystal scarlet *amandes brûlées* in bowls, and sweet trays of Benares ware. Salt-sticks tied with scarlet gauze ribbons. Menu cards of scarlet, with green lettering. Serviettes folded in the slipper design.

This is an exquisite combination, suitable for a winter table. The green of the young lilac leaves is the exact hue of the ranuncula centres. Total cost, 4s.

NO. 2.—AUTUMN TABLE.

A Japanese Scheme.—Table slip of Japanese embroidery—gold and blue threads on a dull pale rose ground. Centre-piece a small “elephant jar,” filled with copper-hued chrysanthemums and

(Japanese) pink almond blossom. Two tall Japanese vases—dull, creamy blue ground, with figures in rose gold and blue thereon—filled to match. Branches of almond blooms arranged as a bordering to centre slip, and laid flatly on slip. Pale pink sweets in Japanese silver dishes (or pewter). Silver candlesticks, and pale pink wax candles without shades. Table glass of dull green Nuremberg and white crystal. Total cost, 3s. to 5s.

NO. 3.—SPRING TABLE.

Table centre of lavender blue voysey velvet, with design of pale green, yellow tulip and bird. Centre-piece a white china "tulip vase," filled with daffodils and daffodil leaves. At either end trumpet vases, filled with yellow marguerites and daffodils. Smaller trumpets filled to match. Yellow nougatines in white china *bonbonnières*. White menu cards with yellow lettering. Saltsticks tied with yellow ribbon. Table glass of white crystal, with hock glasses of daffodil-leaf green and white stems. "Crick lites" in brass candlesticks, with daffodil yellow shades. Total cost for flowers, 2s. 6d. to 3s.

NO. 4.—SPRING TABLE.

Table slip of palest lily-leaf green chiffon. Jonquils and double narcissi in Benares brass

vases. Centre-piece an old Queen Anne brass mortar, filled to match. Pale green sweets in brass sweetie trays. Salt-sticks tied with pale green gauze ribbon. Table glass of green Nuremberg, and palest green hock glasses with crystal stems. Brass "Crick lites" in tall brass candlesticks, with pale green shades. Menu cards of pale green, with silver lettering. Total cost for flowers from 2s. to 2s. 6d. or 3s.

No. 5.—A LEAF SCHEME.

For Luncheon Table.—No flowers are used in this scheme at all. The centre-piece is a feathery trailing fern, mounted on a tall vase; the long trails arranged to either corner of the table. White china trumpet vases are filled with young lilac leaves and buds. At either end of the table vases filled with almond blooms are placed. Menus of white with green lettering. White sweetie dishes filled with pale green sweets. Rolls tied with green ribbon. The serviettes folded to the "ribbon pattern." Total cost—Lilac leaves, 1s.; fern in pot, from 2s. 6d. to 3s.



THE WALTER SCOTT PUBLISHING CO., LTD., FELLING-ON-TYNE.

16

